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BRITISH DIPLOMATIC INSTRUCTIONS  
FRANCE, 1745-1789



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BRITISH  
DIPLOMATIC INSTRUCTIONS  
1689-1789

VOLUME VII. FRANCE, PART IV, 1745-1789

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## PREFACE

THE papers here printed cover a larger number of years than any other volume in the French series of *Instructions*, but matter of importance is more thinly distributed over the period, partly owing to the wars that broke out between Britain and France, partly because of the policy pursued by the former country during the first decade of the reign of King George III.

It must be remembered, with regard to the interval between the peace of Aix la Chapelle and the death of Lord Albemarle, that the official despatches are not the sole sources of information as to the working of the minds of Newcastle and his colleagues, for an active private correspondence was carried on between Newcastle and Albemarle. Owing to the fact that Albemarle died when on duty at Paris, the whole of his correspondence was apparently handed over to Newcastle, who in his business-like way carefully preserved it all in his own house, whence it passed to the British Museum. This correspondence therefore contains the *originals* of the official letters written to Albemarle by the Secretaries of State which can be compared with the office copies in the Public Record Office, together with the private letters that passed between Newcastle and Albemarle. Though the differences between the original despatches and the office copies prove to be trifling, it has been thought better to print from the originals, for they were the documents upon which Albemarle acted. No attempt has been made, except in an occasional footnote, to print the private correspondence.

Similarly, in the negotiations preceding the Treaty of Versailles of 1783, no attempt has been made to include here any of the letters written to FitzHerbert by Shelburne in his capacity as head of the administration, from which Lord Fitzmaurice derived so much valuable information for his biography ; but the selection has been entirely confined to the official correspondence of the Secretaries of

State. In the negotiations conducted by Pitt for the commercial treaty, it has been found necessary to consign, with much regret, the selection to an appendix. Yet the regret may perhaps be tempered by the thought that despatches haggling over tariffs on commodities may be even more repulsive to the general reader than those on frontiers, balance of power, and the designs of foreign statesmen.

Of the instructions themselves, it may be observed that those issued in the first years of the reign of King George III more nearly approach the fullness that one associates with French instructions than at any other time. This is especially true of the instructions given to Bedford in 1762 for the negotiation of the Peace of Paris (pp. 55-64), but though those given to his successor, Lord Hertford, (pp. 85-90) are more ample than usual, even they eventually become stereotyped before the decade is out.

It may perhaps be a matter for surprise that so little is revealed as to the attitude of the British government to the growing disorder in France. It certainly is disappointing that, except for a despatch of Rochford (p. 147) on the recall of the Parliaments, practically nothing can be gleaned from these papers as to the impression made on British ministries by the events they were witnessing. But it must be remembered that comment on the news of domestic affairs in France was no part of the duty of a Foreign Secretary, which lay in demanding and digesting information. Even in the heat of the French Revolution, it was only when those events touched British subjects, as in the despatch sent out after the fall of the Bastille<sup>1</sup> warning them to keep clear of politics, or touched foreign affairs, as in the Nootka Sound dispute, that the British government was sufficiently concerned to give instructions to its ambassador, and it was not until the eve of the revolution of 10 August that it betrayed any emotion at the approaching fate of the French King and Queen. In such matters it remained studiously aloof, but the student of the Revolution will not forget the terms of the letter addressed by the King of Great Britain to the King of the French on his acceptance of the constitution in September 1791, which, if they were not due to sheer inadvertence, expressed studied disapproval of the political philosophy then prevalent in France. Such being the attitude of the British government after the meeting of

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, No. 33 (Leeds to Lord Robert FitzGerald, Whitehall, 31 July 1789).

the States General, it is not surprising that so little is found in the official despatches on French internal affairs in less exciting times.

Until the change of the calendar, dates are in Old Style unless it is otherwise stated.

To the Director of the Society my warmest thanks are due, as often before, for help in manifold ways, but more especially on this occasion, as it is owing to his energy and knowledge alone that the instructions to the Duke of Dorset, of which there is no copy among the Foreign Office papers in the Public Record Office, have been found. The Society is also indebted to the Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission for facilities to inspect and to Lord Sackville for permission to use the original instructions among Dorset's papers. I have also to thank Dr. H. P. Biggar for kindly answering some questions with which I troubled him on Acadian topography.

L. G. W. L.





## INTRODUCTION

THERE are some treaties of peace which, even amid the rejoicings that accompany their conclusion, cannot veil from the inmost thoughts of their negociators, that they are but spells of rest in a great contest. Under all the expressions of a desire "to maintain the tranquillity of Europe now so happily restored" which accompanied and followed the Peace of Aix la Chapelle, there is scarcely concealed the suspicion that sooner or later the struggle must be renewed. For that peace settled nothing; both sides were left sore and angry. To the French it was a subject of contemptuous epigrams; to the British it was, as Sir Richard Lodge has rightly insisted, the consequence of defeat, and the article about Dunkirk is the measure of British failure. Overseas, the colonists saw in the treaty an outstanding example of the selfishness of a mother-country which threw away their hard-won advantages for the sake of her own interests. The seven years of peace that preceded the Seven Years' War proved not unnaturally a time of manœuvring for position, where each party, though reluctant to see the outbreak of war, bent its efforts to putting the other in the wrong.

To say that either side deliberately worked for war would be definitely untrue; rather, they had neglected to observe Lord Stanhope's maxim that the easiest way to avoid a war is not to be too much afraid of it.<sup>1</sup> The peace opened with a bewildering burst of treaties to settle the northern question and try to avoid a war by preventing any change in the government of

<sup>1</sup> See, in respect of the opinion of each power for the other, the remarkable letter of Yorke to Newcastle, Compiègne, June 27/July 8, 1850. France "is a neighbour one should not wantonly provoke, and should be always guarding against by every possible method. They do us the justice to think that is our system" (*B.M., Add. MS. 32822, fo. 89*).

Sweden. If this quadruple alliance would keep the peace, then Britain would give it its blessing,<sup>1</sup> and so long as any change of government in Sweden was likely to result in a disturbance of the peace, so long Great Britain would oppose it.<sup>2</sup> It was undoubtedly fear of a renewal of the Austrian succession war that led King George II and his Secretaries of State to put forward that scheme for securing the election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans which was so angrily derided by Pitt; and his words have found an echo in modern times. But it may be doubted whether a scheme which was calculated to remove a likely source of European discord by negotiation (pp. 12 *et seqq.*) altogether deserves the treatment that it has received from Pitt and his admirers. If criticism of the British promoters of the plan is to be made, it should lie on the ground of precipitately launching the policy before the ways had been properly made ready; of failure to anticipate that Frederick II would make use of every device legal<sup>3</sup> and political<sup>4</sup> to spite his uncle; and lastly of continuing to advocate the election, when this obstacle had been made only too clear, and when Austria, the Court chiefly concerned, had lost all interest in the matter (p. 29). In the eyes of the British ministers Frederick was the chief murderer of the scheme, but France had played a game which they stigmatised as contemptible, for she had suffered herself to be used merely as a pawn in the game of an upstart King of Prussia (pp. 13, 21, 25).

It cannot be denied that the persistence of the British government in this matter involved it in considerable loss of dignity, especially as it was not necessary from the lack of any alternative plan for preserving the peace. For, like all his contemporaries, Newcastle had a reasoned faith in the principle of a balance of power. This he would seek by opposing the alliance of Austria

<sup>1</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32818, fo. 130 (Newcastle to Albemarle, private, Newcastle House, 24 Aug. 1749).

<sup>2</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32827, fo. 46 (Memorandum of Newcastle in reply to Richécourt's *mémoire instructif* on Sweden and the north).

<sup>3</sup> The chief of these was that election to the Kingship of the Romans required unanimity, not as the Hanoverians held merely an "eminent majority." All however were agreed that in the election of an Emperor a majority sufficed (pp. 22, 23).

<sup>4</sup> Encouragement of opposition by France (pp. 13-14), and of the constant rise of the demands of the Elector Palatine as the price of his vote (pp. 25-8, 31, 33). See also *B.M., Add. MS.* 32832, fo. 105 v. (Newcastle to Albemarle, Newcastle House, 5 Dec. 1751, very private).

and Britain to that of the nefarious couple France and Prussia. Estimating that the wrath of the Empress-Queen over the cession of Parma to Don Philip was but a passing fit of spleen, he ordered Albemarle to enter into close relations with Count Kaunitz, the newly-appointed Austrian ambassador at Versailles (pp. 11, 12), but Kaunitz was in no mood to open himself unreservedly.<sup>1</sup> The rebuff did not open Newcastle's eyes to the temper of the Austrian Court, and in 1751 he was overjoyed when the Court of Spain communicated to that of Great Britain the whole negotiation that had been conducted with the "awkward" Court of Vienna for the neutrality of Italy. Here was the basis, as he thought, of a quadruple defensive alliance of Austria, Spain, Sardinia and Great Britain to counterbalance Prussia, France and Holland, whose conduct, since the death of the Stadtholder William IV, had been, to say the least, equivocal. *Auspicium pulchrius esse nequit*, he wrote in his enthusiasm to Albemarle,<sup>2</sup> but Austrian comments soon covered him with confusion. "That detestable and unpracticable Court of Vienna"<sup>3</sup> drily observed that as the treaty was to preserve the neutrality of Italy, it was no matter for Great Britain, which had no territory in that peninsula; nor was he much consoled by Albemarle's comment that as the treaty was to be concluded with the knowledge of Great Britain and without the concurrence of France, the Family Compact appeared to be in some jeopardy,<sup>4</sup> for it merely made him sceptical as to the union between Spain and Austria.<sup>5</sup> His gloomy vaticinations, however, were not realised in their entirety, and the treaty of Aranjuez was signed in the spring of 1752. Though it fell short of the "most agreeable and honorable scene for the King and this nation"<sup>6</sup> that he had conjured up the year before, and though he was none too restrained in the epithets he was at this time applying to the Imperial Court, these

<sup>1</sup> For Kaunitz' behaviour towards the British embassy see Yorke's letter to Hardwicke, Paris, 7/18 Nov. 1750 (*B.M., Add. MS.* 32825, fo. 29 *et seqq.*).

<sup>2</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32830, fo. 191 (very private, Newcastle House, 4 Oct. 1751).

<sup>3</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32838, fo. 203 (Newcastle to Albemarle, private, Hanover, 8/19 July, 1752).

<sup>4</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32831, fo. 276 v. (Albemarle to Newcastle, Paris, Dec. 1/ Nov. 20 1751).

<sup>5</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32832, fo. 107 (Newcastle to Albemarle, very private, Newcastle House, 5 Dec. 1751).

<sup>6</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32830, fo. 188 (Newcastle to Albemarle, very private, Newcastle House, 4 Oct. 1751).

events did not deter Newcastle from wishing the Austrians well and basing his continental policy on the assumption of their good will. Nevertheless the prospect on the Continent was dark; in view of the apathy of Austria, Hanover seemed to be at the mercy of two unscrupulous neighbours, of whom one, Prussia, made no secret of her malevolence. Two episodes seemed especially to threaten peace. The earlier was the question of the Saxon *Steuer* or public bank of the estates of the electors of Saxony (p. 33), where the demands of Frederick, exorbitant and threatened with enforcement at the sword's point, caused serious alarm to Newcastle, who as we have seen was in no mood for a war in Germany<sup>1</sup>; the other concerned Britain directly. Because some Prussian ships, seized during the late war, had been condemned by the British Admiralty Court, he in 1753 withheld the interest due on monies advanced by private British subjects to the Austrian government for Silesian purposes, although he himself had guaranteed the interest after the conquest of that province. Unless he were compensated for the loss of the ships, or they were restored, the money would not be paid, and though there was reason to believe the French were trying to modify his attitude, nothing had been settled before the outbreak of hostilities between France and Britain. What made this matter the more delicate was that the French had a complaint, similar to the Prussian, though not on all fours with it, as Holderness was careful to point out to Albemarle (p. 38).<sup>2</sup> Spain alone was a bright spot in the landscape. There, what with a highly sympathetic Irishman, General Richard Wall, as Spanish ambassador in London, and a most influential Englishman, Benjamin Keene, as British ambassador in Madrid, all the intrigues of the Duc de Duras were defeated, and the pro-French party was beaten to the ground when in 1754 Ensenada was dismissed (p. 46). Wall was recalled to be the chief counsellor of Ferdinand VI, and Anglophile influences triumphed, and never were they more needed than at the time when Boscawen's blundering action off Newfoundland gave France an almost irresistible request for Spain to come to her help against the aggression of the British.

For it was overseas that trouble was brewing, nor would it be

<sup>1</sup> A good account of the *Steuer* controversy will be found in D. B. Horn, *Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams and European Diplomacy*, Harrap, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> For the whole business see Sir Ernest Satow, *The Silesian Loan and Frederick the Great*, Oxford, 1915.

fair to insinuate that because of his attention to continental affairs, Newcastle was blind to the fact. From the very first, North America and the West Indies were a source of continual trouble,<sup>1</sup> but it was but gradually that India ("those barbarous countries") forced itself on to the diplomatic field (see pp. 41-5, 50-2). Both sides in these colonial questions were determined to maintain their rights, but from the British point of view, the pace was always forced by the French, who on the frontiers in North America had as early as 1749 begun to encroach (p. 7) and to hold very stiff language, being encouraged, as Newcastle thought, by their success in forming the quadruple alliance for northern affairs in that year.<sup>2</sup> Next year he was stigmatising the behaviour of the French officials in Canada as "abominable,"<sup>3</sup> and in the burning of Beau Bassin and Chignecto on the borders of Acadia, he had a *prima facie* ground of complaint (pp. 9 and 10). So too had the French, for the British had captured a French ship, alleging that she was gun-running to the Indians.<sup>4</sup> These frontier questions on the Acadian border, were, like the West Indian matters, to be treated of by commissioners, who were appointed this same year (see Appendix I, pp. 309-13). But this method, upon which the French insisted and to which the British somewhat demurred, proved very defective, and three years later the British were complaining of intolerable delays, and attempting to persuade the French Court to negotiate *de cour en cour* (p. 34). The French were not inclined to agree, nor had much satisfaction been obtained by the autumn of 1754 (see pp. 47-8). It was indeed Newcastle's opinion that the French were deliberately "keeping all disputes on foot" while making great professions of a desire to maintain the peace.<sup>5</sup> And in the West

<sup>1</sup> On one occasion Canada is described as "the most ticklish and the most important point that we have almost ever had *singly* to negotiate with France." See *B.M.*, *Add. MS.* 32822, fo. 306 (Newcastle to Yorke, Hanover, 30 July/10 Aug. 1750).

<sup>2</sup> *B.M.*, *Add. MS.* 32818, fo. 130 (Newcastle to Albemarle, private, Newcastle House, 24 Aug. 1749).

<sup>3</sup> *B.M.*, *Add. MS.* 32821, fo. 448 v (Newcastle to Albemarle, Hanover, 15/26 June 1750).

<sup>4</sup> *P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 240, fo. 1v. (Albemarle to Bedford, Paris, 2/13 January 1750/1).

<sup>5</sup> *B.M.*, *Add. MS.* 32844, ff. 321 v. *et seqq.* (Newcastle to Albemarle, private, Newcastle House, 24 May 1753). "They make new pretensions every day upon us with regard to trade, prizes, limits, or something or other. They don't indeed push them to extremities, but they keep them all depending, in



Indies, the complaints of the British Government were as ancient as those about Acadia. The three "neutral islands," Sta. Lucia, St. Vincent and Dominica were to be made "neutral" again, while Tobago, ceded back to Great Britain, was also to be evacuated. Yet nothing was done (pp. 2-4). This was in 1749. In the next year Newcastle complained that Poinssablé,<sup>1</sup> the new governor of Martinique, had refused to execute the order for the evacuation of the neutral islands, on the "shameful pretence" that the orders had been directed to his predecessor and not to himself. And though Albemarle pacified the angry minister with satisfactory assurances from France, yet in 1751 the governor of Martinique was reported to have "started difficulties about the evacuation of the four islands" (pp. 14-16), and it then appeared that the French understood that evacuation meant only military and not civil evacuation.<sup>2</sup> Nor did the British on the spot help much if Commodore Holbourne retorted to the French governor that he would treat the civil population as banditti (p. 15), a phrase which Albemarle prudently suppressed in conversation with Puyzieulx. It is not, however, surprising that by 1754 the British ministers begin to hiss out words like "shuffling" and "chicaning," while pluming themselves on the exactitude with which the evacuation had been carried out on their side, as in the case of St. Martin's. (p. 15).

It is possible that the retirement of Puyzieulx brought a change for the worse in the relations between Britain and France. He had been a man of pacific temperament, and on this Newcastle had placed some degree of reliance for obtaining redress over these colonial disputes. On the other hand, his successor, St. Contest, had always been looked upon with suspicion.<sup>3</sup> Yet it may well be doubted whether Puyzieulx would have been able to keep the peace, considering the actions of the enterprising governors of Canada and order to make use of them *en tems et lieux*. They are now repairing, re-establishing or seeming to do it, the fortifications at Dunkirk. . . . The camps, the armaments at Toulon, and the continuation and augmentation of their foreign subsidies are all suspicious circumstances. . . ."

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 237, fo. 5 (Newcastle to Albemarle, Göhrde, 31 August /11 September 1750).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 240, fo. 331 (Albemarle to Bedford, Paris, 18/29 April 1751).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B.M., Add. MS.* 32839, fo. 378 v. (Albemarle to Newcastle, Paris, 31 Aug./11 Sept. 1752). "[Puyzieulx] is a man of honour and principle, to be relied on; this tool of Machaut's [St. Contest] is a shuffling lawyer adorned with French good manners."

Louisiana in the region of the headwaters of the Ohio. As early as June 1751 an angry exchange of letters had passed between Clinton, the governor of New York, and La Jonquière, the governor of Canada, over alleged French encroachments "on the river of Oniagara, between Lake Erie and Cadaruckui Lake" in the territory of the Iroquois.<sup>1</sup> The matter was taken up by Holdernessee; but next year it became more serious, for the French erected a fort at Crown Point at the head of Lake Champlain on British soil (p. 28) "very obnoxious to His Majesty's subjects."<sup>2</sup> The danger was pretty obvious, and in January 1754 Newcastle wrote privately to Albemarle that the French plan was to erect forts "so as to reduce us to a bare narrow possession on the sea-coast, and for this they think *we* will not venture a rupture."<sup>3</sup> On the top of this French seamen were embarked at Dunkirk (p. 45) for an unknown destination, perhaps for the East Indies; but after the disaster to Washington's army the government took strong action. They peremptorily demanded (p. 47) three things of the French government: the execution of the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle; the abandonment of the forts of Nova Scotia; and the evacuation of the Ohio valley, and in support of this sent out a force under General Braddock to reinforce the colonists. The French, said Robinson (p. 49), could scarcely complain, seeing that 1,200 men ("loose people") had annually been sent to America with a proportionate number of officers during the last five years.

The negotiation, or rather dispute, had reached thus far when Albemarle suddenly died, and the astonishment of Waddington that in such a crisis no successor was appointed does not seem unreasonable. It was the same in 1739 when Waldegrave crept home to die. In both cases relations between the two Courts had become so strained that it seemed not to have been thought worth while to appoint a new ambassador, and the negotiations were carried on through the French ambassador in London only. Newcastle indeed seems to have felt that it was only a matter of time, and

<sup>1</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32833, ff. 389-91 (Clinton to La Jonquière, New York, 12 June 1751, and La Jonquière to Clinton, Montreal, 10 August 1751, N.S.).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 244, fo. 158 (Albemarle to Newcastle, Paris, 4/15 June, 1752, apart) in which it is stated on the authority of Mildmay the commissioner that Crown Point being in a bottom could easily be commanded from any of the surrounding heights.

<sup>3</sup> *B.M., Add. MS.* 32848, fo. 86 (Private, Newcastle House, 15 Jan. 1754).

that it was essential that the French should appear in the wrong. He believed that all along the line he had a strong case against them. "We must do ourselves right in North America; they are the aggressors." But he was not destined to have as clear a case as he desired, for Boscawen largely destroyed it in May 1755.<sup>1</sup>

With the accession of King George III we find almost a dramatic change of policy. It is not merely that peace is made with France in spite of the war party<sup>2</sup>; the change of policy is far deeper than this. Whether it be true or not that the young King reverted in domestic politics to the constitutional ideas of King William III, he certainly did not do so in foreign affairs, for the first ten years of the reign saw a deliberate effort to carry out the old Tory policy of abstention from continental questions. Nothing can be more trivial than the subjects of the despatches to the British ambassadors in the years immediately following the Peace of Paris, and if proof were needed of the contrast between the policy of the King and that of his grandfather, it is abundantly afforded by the answer to the Elector of Saxony's prayer for support in the forthcoming election to the throne of Poland (p. 91 n). Few students of history would believe that such a policy is nowadays practical, but in those days it was more arguable; yet the experiment failed, because the government could not carry it out consistently. It was quite unable to shake itself free from the idea of nemesis for the Treaty of Paris, and the belief that France would one day take its revenge on a vindictive peace is a staple article in the instructions given to the short-tenured ambassadors of the early years of the reign (see pp. 86, 94 &c.). It could not resign itself to viewing French proceedings with indifference, and therefore ambassadors were warned to keep the greatest vigilance on the relations of France with Spain, Austria and Prussia. For five years the policy of abstention from European questions was successfully carried out, but in 1768 the designs of the French upon Corsica began to be apparent and the British government at once took alarm. Never perhaps was a feebler part played by a lately victorious government towards its

<sup>1</sup> All this can be seen in full detail from both British and French sources in R. Waddington, *Louis XV et le renversement des alliances*, Paris, 1896. Cf. also Julian Corbett, *England in the Seven Years War*, Longmans, 1907, Vol. I, capp. 2 and 3.

<sup>2</sup> The instructions and despatches to Bedford will be found on pp. 55-83.



conquered foe. Protest followed on protest: the projected annexation was described as "a step totally departing from the principle . . . that the extension of territory of any of the great powers of Europe must endanger the peace of Europe." With wearisome reiteration (pp. 101-4) the British renewed their veto; yet in December 1769, when Choiseul had successfully completed the annexation, all these threats and expostulations gave birth at length to the miserable declaration that after all, the suspicions of the British government had proved in the event to be justified (p. 110 n.). Time moreover was to provide further proofs of the impracticability, even in those days, of the policy. Dunkirk was a constant sore; the Manila ransom discussions with Spain proved to be a sort of prologue to the drama of the Falkland Islands (pp. 114-23) while the outbreak of war in the Balkans between Russia and Turkey, a region of Europe not distant from that which the King had told the Elector of Saxony was of no interest to Great Britain, heralded a whole series of alarms about French aggression in the Mediterranean and the Levant (pp. 111-13, 115-22). The fall of Choiseul in no way relieved the British government of the necessity of keeping an eye on the French; indeed d'Aiguillon was so tricky as to need increased vigilance, and as difficulties in America increased, so did British suspicion of the French deepen, and rightly. For though Vergennes' famous memorial on the conduct to be pursued towards the British and their rebellious colonies was not drawn up till the reign of Louis XVI, there can be little doubt that the spirit of it animated the less purposeful policy of the Duke d'Aiguillon. Many things occurred calculated to make the flesh of George III and his ministers creep; the rumoured proposal of a commercial treaty embracing France, Spain and Portugal might deal a deathblow to the monopoly of woollens enjoyed by the British in Portugal (pp. 125-6); a contemplated increase of French troops in the East Indies drew a remonstrance to which d'Aiguillon gave an impudent reply; in the Levant, the British were in turn accused of aggression, for that the Russians had offered them an island in the Ægean. The British indignantly denied this, and declared that there was good reason to believe that the truth lay in the French making common cause there with the Russians. Only on the partition of Poland was there anything like silence, but the part played by France in that transaction could scarcely give rise to remonstrance. The action of the

partitioning powers was highly repugnant to the British, yet when the other home of "liberty" guaranteed by Russia and Prussia was saved from a like fate by Gustavus III and Vergennes, it was declared to be a matter in which Britain could not remain indifferent. Stormont indeed had here the satisfaction of scoring something like a diplomatic victory. When it was proposed to fit out a fleet to go to the Baltic, he warned the French that they might help Gustavus with money, or land forces, or in any way, save by sea, and that a French fleet in the Baltic would mean a British one there too.<sup>1</sup> A fit of temper on the part of Louis XV led to the squadron being transferred from Brest to Toulon, where it was hoped that in the Mediterranean French pressure on the Russians would relieve Sweden from danger in that quarter.<sup>2</sup> Stormont continued, however, to remonstrate and the Toulon expedition was abandoned. The incident showed that the French were not prepared to go beyond a policy of pinpricks, and for this, India continued to provide an abundance of opportunity to the *chargé d'affaires* during Stormont's absence to press his government with warnings as to French designs.<sup>3</sup>

The death of Louis XV was reported by Stormont with sincere regret.<sup>4</sup> The fact was that very soon after his arrival he had divined that the chief bulwark of peace at Versailles was the King himself, and the incident of the French squadron intended for the Baltic had been proof of his surmise. The new King was an unknown quantity; he was credited with a fractious and passionate temper, and a resentment against the disgraceful termination of the Seven Years' War. This did not augur well for the future. On the other hand he was said to be very zealous for economy, and this might counteract the desire for revenge on Britain. Of infirmity of purpose we hear nothing at first, but a month was enough to make it evident, and it occasioned the fall of Aiguillon who hastened to send in his resignation on being told by the King

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 287 (Stormont to Rochford, Paris, 31 March 1773, private).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (Stormont to Rochford, Paris, 4 April 1773, private).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 290 (St. Paul to Rochford, Paris, 28 Nov. 1773, no. 60 in cipher). See St. Paul's correspondence in *Colonel St. Paul of Ewart*, ed. G. G. Butler, London, 1911.

<sup>4</sup> "For my part, my Lord, I shall consider His Most Christian Majesty's death as a real misfortune, and see the approach of it with deep concern" (to Rochford, Paris, 8 May 1774, in *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 292, holograph).

that his administration was giving satisfaction and that a change was not desired, "at least for the present, *pas encore*."<sup>1</sup> To the office of foreign affairs Vergennes was summoned from Stockholm. The nomination was unexpected to the British ministry; they feared Broglie, Chatelet or Breteuil, and hoped for Nivernais (p. 142). Of the abilities of the last of the great foreign ministers of old France they seem to have had little idea (p. 142), but to have been more cautious in their estimates than when their predecessors had had to do with Vergennes at Hanover in 1752.<sup>2</sup> Almost immediately after his assumption of office, relations between the two Courts began to grow more uneasy. In July, Dunkirk took a disagreeable turn, but it proved a fleeting affair, and Stormont, who attributed the whole matter to "the French King's precipitancy and want of reflexion," was convinced that the French had no intention of forcing a rupture, but was seriously afraid that it might come from "the young man's want of temper and reflexion."<sup>3</sup> For the moment, however, it looked as though the French were more interested in safe-guarding the new *régime* in Sweden, which they imagined was menaced by Russia now that the hands of the Muscovites had been freed by the disconcerting peace of Kutchuk-Kainardji (pp. 143-4). At the opposite point of the compass trouble also was brewing between Spain and Portugal over the boundaries between Brazil and Paraguay, and this actually flared up into war in 1776. All European questions, however, were thrown into the shade by that of the colonies. A few despatches after 1775 pay lip service to the opinion that European questions do exist, but the affairs of America dominate the diplomatic landscape. Fortified by the result of its appeal to the people in the general election of 1774, Lord North's government was able to stiffen its attitude towards France, and we hear more and more of the irregularities that marked the conduct of French subjects towards a friendly power. The

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 292 (Stormont to Rochford, Paris, 8 June 1774, confidential).

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 243, fo. 209 v. (Albemarle to Holderness, Paris, 11/22 March 1752): "A sensible polite man, but having been bred up by his uncle Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Chavigny, he has a great many of his ways in his ministerial qualities." This is ministerial style; for the more intimate see *B.M., Add. MS.* 32839, fo. 378 v. (Albemarle to Newcastle, Paris, 20/31 Aug. 1751): "He seems to be a compound of everything bad, for he is instructed by St. Contest, bred up by Chavigny, and now advised by him. *C'est tout dire*."

<sup>3</sup> *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 292 (Stormont to Rochford, Paris, 27 July 1774, holograph, private).

policy laid down in Vergennes' famous memorandum was carried out with assiduity and skill, nor is any cause, save that of prejudice, advantaged by describing his conduct as that of a conspirator rather than of a statesman. Granted that a policy of revenge was to be adopted, the international situation afforded too good opportunities to neglect, and Vergennes would have been guilty of dereliction of duty had he acted otherwise. Therefore a "very illicit" trade which the French were conducting with the colonies was complained of as early as January 1775<sup>1</sup> (p. 148), and nothing was done to satisfy the British in the matter, while the outbreak of war between Spain and Portugal made it still easier to throw dust in the eyes of the British. Stormont's intelligence officers were set to watch all straws which could reveal the direction of the wind. It was reported that armaments, larger than were warranted by the state of French finances, were being made in French ports in July 1776, but the excuse was that Spain was contributing very largely to the expense (p. 150). Later on, Pombal's conduct prevented any remonstrance being made against Bourbon armaments (p. 153), and all representations against the French proposal to send a force to St. Domingo were met with evasive answers. Stormont's difficulties were naturally increased by the arrival of Silas Deane, even before the Declaration of Independence (p. 152), nor did the utterances of the great give any certain indication of French plans. The King, whose question: *Me prenez-vous donc pour une girouette?*<sup>2</sup> can hardly be read without a shudder, gave reasons for an answer in the affirmative by a series of utterly inconsistent sayings gathered by Stormont.<sup>3</sup> Torn between the desire to have a glorious revenge for the Treaty of Paris and a grave doubt whether the monarchy should assist republican rebels, he turned this way and that, and in February 1777 was reported to be listening with favour to Maurepas whose policy was to allow Great Britain to conquer the rebels, as she was bound to do, if left alone, and exhaust herself in the process. For, if France openly supported America, how could

<sup>1</sup> It had been a subject for despatches, but not for diplomatic action, for five years at least previous to this date. (See *P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 279, Harcourt to Weymouth, Paris, 17 Dec. 1769.)

<sup>2</sup> *P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 306 (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 15 March 1778, confidential).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, no. 300 (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 20 Nov. 1776, most confidential; Paris, 28 Nov. 1776, second most confidential: 11 Dec. 1776, holograph, private).

the Spanish colonies be kept loyal to the Catholic King? It might indeed be part of Maurepas' scheme to offer the help of the French to the British, provided the latter would pay France her price in the retrocession of Canada,<sup>1</sup> but the suggestion was disdainfully rejected by Britain (p. 160). If the King's words gave no clue to French policy, those of the Comte d'Artois, more steady in their hostility to Britain, were valueless as pieces of intelligence; while Vergennes was careful to give as little indication of his policy as possible. "He avoids direct falsehood, but does not avoid evasion."<sup>2</sup>

Silas Deane came avowedly on a mission to secure an alliance and, failing that, munitions and volunteers, but it needed Franklin to put real pressure upon the French government. This specimen of primitive human simplicity was not unanimously welcomed in French official circles. *Déjiez-vous de lui, c'est un maître fripon*,<sup>3</sup> was Sartine's estimate of the new envoy, nor is it certain that Vergennes would have reversed the verdict in 1783. Franklin's inveteracy against this country was an open secret, but Stormont felt it his duty to warn his government of his ability,<sup>4</sup> and he certainly would never have descended to the unworthy jibes against Franklin's personal courage which the British ministers allowed themselves to utter (p. 146). For the moment, however, the apparent prosperity of the British cause in America early in 1777 effectually prevented the French government from making any overt act of sympathy with the rebels, and Stormont's triumphant notification of these successes to the French government<sup>5</sup> was followed by a French proposal for partial disarmament (p. 161), a proposal eagerly taken up by the British who were proportionately

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 301 (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 5 Feb. 1777, most particular, no. 24; 5 Feb. 1777, holograph, confidential).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 300 (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 8 Oct. 1776, most secret, no. 87).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 300 (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 25 Dec. 1776, most confidential). He may, of course, have got the idea from Stormont.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* (Stormont to Weymouth, 11 Dec. 1776, particular, no. 119). "As he is a subtle, artful man and void of all truth, he will use every means to deceive."

<sup>5</sup> On this occasion Vergennes made one of his rare slips, for his comment on the news that Washington had been made dictator for six months was that it was "a dangerous measure *dans une république naissante*"—a phrase which Stormont noted (*ibid.*, no. 301, Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 26 Mar. 1777, no. 54, secret).



disappointed when it was dropped very shortly afterwards.<sup>1</sup> Stormont, however, unlike his *chargé d'affaires*, remained optimistic, believing that the French were showing so much caution that the inevitable surrender of the rebels would take place before they could make up their minds to intervene.<sup>2</sup> He reckoned without allowing for accidents, such as Saratoga. For the time he had to deal with an intensified policy of pinpricks. Whereas the Kings of Portugal and of Sweden prohibited rebel ships from entering their ports (pp. 151 and 158), the French King's conduct in this matter afforded a glaring contrast, and rebel piracy was encouraged by every means that an ingenious chicanery could suggest (see pp. 159, 160, 162, 164, 165-70, 172-3). Excuses were multiplied for sending a French expedition to the West Indies, in spite of the obviously unfriendly intention lying behind it (p. 172), and the admiral at Brest was so indiscreet as to salute the rebel flag (p. 170). All this perhaps was within the rules of the game as between government and government, but the conduct of Lafayette and his companions raises doubts on their claims to be considered men of honour and gentlemen (p. 160). One remark may perhaps at this point be made about the ministers of King George III. Many as were the mistakes which King and ministers made in their handling of the American situation, they were not guilty, so far as these despatches show, of the calumny whispered by Camden into the ears of Chatham that they were abjectly suing France for peace.<sup>3</sup> In this correspondence there is no sign that they forgot the dignity of Great Britain as against France and Spain.

That Britain if left to herself could have conquered, though not contented America, may be granted on a review of the respective situations of the two parties at the beginning of 1781. For though she had to combat the powerful support given by the Bourbon powers and Holland, and though exposed to all the harassing tactics of the Armed Neutrality, Britain then had her rebels by the throat. Their finances were bankrupt, their soldiers

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 302 (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 19 April 1777, holograph, secret).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (Stormont to Weymouth, Paris, 4 June 1777, no. 97, most secret).

<sup>3</sup> See Basil Williams, *Life of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, London, Vol. II, p. 328.

mutinous, their ships at the bottom of the sea, their civilians in despair, and their diplomats alienating their best and most powerful friends in Europe. Only the fortitude of Washington gave life to the cause, and even he would have sunk had it not been for the French. But war-weariness and the persistent attacks of the Whigs in England were doing their work almost as well as Sartine and de Grasse, and when the news came of Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, it was clear that the end had come, for Great Britain abandoned the game. The fall of Lord North made way for Shelburne who quickly divined that though Franklin was our bitter enemy, he was no friend to the Bourbons, and the "Jesuit of Berkeley Square" rendered his most signal service to this country by dissolving the coalition between America and France. Into those negotiations there is no need to go at length here. The story has been often and well told.<sup>1</sup> The documents here printed do not of course deal with the negotiations conducted through Richard Oswald with Adams, Jay and Franklin; the reader will find a selection from those only that were handled by Alleyne FitzHerbert. To this negotiator were entrusted not merely the peace with France, but also those with Spain and Holland, to say nothing of the complication that was always present to the minds of FitzHerbert and Vergennes, of the more than half-accepted mediation of the Imperial Courts of Austria and Russia. In FitzHerbert's instructions the idea of keeping the American negotiations separate is clearly fore-shadowed (pp. 181-2), and this was further developed in a subsequent despatch, which made no pretence of hiding the ministry's design of using the Americans as a lever against the continental powers (p. 185). Nor was Vergennes' early attempt to divide the European negotiation into, so to speak, water-tight compartments, received with any more favour; the treaty had to embrace pretty well the whole world, and one part must be bargained for if necessary against another (pp. 186-7). Hence the immense amount of counters that were used in the game which at times become bewilderingly diverse. How, for example, can eighty villages in Madras Presidency be equated with Tobago or Dominica (p. 218), or what

<sup>1</sup> See especially Mr. Cecil Headlam's chapter in the first volume of the *Cambridge History of the British Empire*. For the more specifically American negotiations of Shelburne see Lord Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, 2nd ed., Vol. II, where use has been made of the unofficial correspondence of Shelburne and FitzHerbert.

obvious relation has Dunkirk with Bengal, except that fortifications and ditches appear in regard to both ; or again how can Negapatam be readily balanced against Demerara and Essequibo? In these respects the negotiation undoubtedly displays some of the worst features of the system of reckoning balance of power by territorial equivalents.

The great despatch of 23 September (pp. 186-91) covers the whole range of the negotiation, and serves as an instruction to FitzHerbert, but afterwards, as had been devised by the British, the negotiations become separate. As to France, only two questions gave rise to prolonged difficulty ; the claim to an *exclusive* right of fishing off the coast of Newfoundland, which, whatever the specious colour Vergennes may have given it, was but the revival of a previous and preposterous claim (pp. 81-2, 199) ; and the British claim for Dominica, which was insisted upon and eventually obtained only at the price of several villages in southern India and of Tobago (pp. 199-202, 210-14, 217-20). In other respects, matters between Britain and France went with some smoothness, and though ministers were at one time disappointed when in October French demands rose as compared with what Rayneval had led them to expect in September, no real difficulty was experienced in giving St. Pierre and Miquelon to the French in full sovereignty in return for any territorial claim to the Newfoundland shore (p. 199), and in ceding St. Lucia in return for St. Vincent, St. Kitt's, Grenada, Nevis and Montserrat (pp. 200, 203, 210, 214), even though it required the removal of the all-important question of Dominica before this path of the negotiation could be considered clear. Nor was India a serious difficulty. A demand to fortify Chandernagore was whittled down to permission to make a ditch "for draining the waters," while the re-establishment of other French factories in India was accompanied by an agreement that neither side would assist "the country powers" against the other, a vague statement which really covered the prohibition of intrigue between the French and Hyder Ali (pp. 222, 223). *Per contra*, no difficulty arose over allowing the French to fortify Dunkirk, nor was any objection made to the principle of a commercial treaty between the two countries. The preliminaries therefore were signed on 20 January 1783, and it only remained to work out details. The most troublesome was that governing the cession of Tobago (pp. 224, 225), and although Manchester did his best to secure that religious liberty for Protestants



in the island should be guaranteed, as well as security of tenure and the interests on mortgages, and although he wrote hopefully about it, he failed to secure that in the definitive treaty anything was said about religion.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it was the British who raised difficulties about the clause providing for a commercial treaty, for with traditional Whig reluctance against facility of trade with France they opposed any *terminus ad quem* for its conclusion. To the appointment of commissioners to negotiate a treaty they could not object; but the subsequent history of these negotiations was to show clearly how little zeal animated the British, even under the younger Pitt, for a commercial treaty with France<sup>2</sup> (pp. 219-20).

From the haughtiness with which Vergennes had opened the negotiations, much had been abated. To this had contributed The Saints; Vergennes' fear of national bankruptcy; the belief that the British government might give way to Fox, who would probably recognise American independence and then round on the French; and the evident untrustworthiness of the Americans, who in November signed preliminaries with the British without communicating them to their own allies. He was therefore in no mood to regard with complacency the demands put forward by the Spaniards in October 1782 (p. 198). These seemed to be infused with the spirit of what should be rather than of what was, and Shelburne's first impulse was to meet them with "a direct negative" (p. 193). That Minorca, lost to Spain in the previous year, should be ceded by Britain was not unreasonable, and to demand Gibraltar before the fate of the fortress had been decided by the arbitrament of arms cannot seriously be criticised; but the derisory offer of compensation in Oran and Mazalquivir, the demand that the British should evacuate all their territory on the mainland of Central America, together with Florida and the Bahamas, coupled with the revival of a claim, put forward in 1763 and contemptuously dismissed, for a share in the Newfoundland fishery, none of these has anything to commend it. The fishery claim was rejected out of hand (pp. 194,

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., F.O.* 27, no. 6, p. 531 (Manchester to Fox, Paris, 18 June 1783, no. 14). He obtained security of property and mortgages and abolition of *droit d'aubaine*, together with permission to leave the island.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. Holland Rose, *William Pitt and the National Revival*, cap. xiv. A commercial treaty with France had been advocated in 1767 by Rochford (*P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 272. To Shelburne, Paris, 7 May, secret and confidential).

196) ; not so the demands for Central America and Gibraltar. On the former some facility was at first shown (p. 198), while on Gibraltar, no definite refusal to consider retrocession was given, even after the news had come of the destruction of the floating batteries and of the relief of the fortress ; what did give rise to prolonged discussion was the equivalent for the Rock. If Britain should cede it, then the equivalent must be Cuba, West Florida, Minorca and the Bahamas (p. 197), a list which probably betrays the King's belief that the future of the Empire lay in the West Indies. At the same time a message was sent to Vergennes that his management of the Spaniards at this juncture would be a test of his sincerity for peace (p. 198). How anxious the French were in fact to satisfy both Britain and Spain may be seen in their efforts over Gibraltar, where they went so far as to offer to sacrifice Dominica and Guadeloupe to Britain as compensation for the Rock, and trust to obtaining for themselves an equivalent out of Spain (p. 201), whereupon the cabinet "unanimously" decided to give up any claim for Minorca and the two Floridas. Matters, however, were moving rapidly. The very next day they were apprised of Vergennes' approach to the Spanish Court with the request to abandon the claim for Gibraltar (p. 202) ; and when, through Aranda, the request was complied with (p. 209) the whole ground of the negotiation shifted from the compensation Great Britain should receive for giving up Gibraltar to the compensation she should pay for retaining it (p. 211). Here agreement proved not to be difficult ; the suggestion made by Britain was adopted, and she abandoned to Spain Minorca and the two Floridas (p. 211).

Just as dramatic in the sudden reversal of fortune was the negotiation concerning Central America. It is clear that the Spanish were anxious to limit the right of the British to cut logwood in Honduras (pp. 212-13). The matter lay almost dormant until after the signature of the preliminaries and the accession of Fox to the Foreign Office, when, doubtless in order to honour the criticisms which the opposition had passed on Shelburne's conduct of the negotiations, he made a strong effort in all matters of dispute in Central America. In June he was demanding extended boundaries for the cutters of logwood in Honduras (pp. 237-8) and in July, when the negotiation had reached the stage which is marked by close scrutiny of the wording, he was objecting to the phraseology in which evacuations by British Protestants of their settlements in

Spanish America were being provided for ; but this gave him the opportunity to claim that the British settlements on the Mosquito shore should by no means be abandoned (pp. 240-1). He even went so far as to argue that Spanish domination had never been recognised there, even by the Indians, still less by the British. Suddenly he found that his predecessor had committed him by a letter to Aranda, and the settlements on the Mosquito shore had to be given up (p. 243). On the logwood settlements of Honduras, no particular difficulty was experienced in the end, and the sixth article of the treaty, recognising the King of Spain's sovereignty there allowed the British the right to cut wood and put up such buildings as were necessary for the purpose, and required that all British subjects residing outside certain limits should retire within them.

In some ways the Dutch negotiation proved to be the most difficult of all, for the Dutch constitution clogged the progress of the negotiation, and the two countries had been unnaturally estranged during the past fifty years. The envoys at Paris were Berkenroode and Brantzen of whom the latter made the more favourable impression on FitzHerbert.<sup>1</sup> Three points emerged specially requiring settlement. First and foremost came the question of the rights of neutrals in time of war, upon which the negotiations began with stringent demands from the Dutch, who went so far as to say that this must be a preliminary article to be settled before any further negotiation could take place. When FitzHerbert demurred to so extravagant a request he was reminded that Fox had agreed to the principle of the Armed Neutrality six months earlier in a letter to the Russian ambassador. FitzHerbert's reply was that as the Dutch had refused the offer made by Britain which entailed this concession as a condition, the concession had been withdrawn ; and his answer was naturally approved<sup>2</sup> (pp. 205-6). The second demand was the restoration of places captured during the war ; while the third required recognition that the British had been the aggressors and indemnification by the British for the capture of those Dutch ships whose masters had not known of the outbreak of the war. The slowness of the Dutch negotiations fairly broke Vergennes' temper, and certainly tried FitzHerbert's, so that

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., F.O.* 27, no. 3, p. 292 (FitzHerbert to Grantham, Paris, 19 Sept. 1782, no. 56).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

all pretence of concurrence in the negotiations was abandoned. Not until December, after the American preliminaries had been signed, and the crisis over Gibraltar come well on the way to settlement, did the Dutch negotiation begin in earnest ; and apart from the incoherence of the allies, the most striking feature of it is the rapid abandonment of the demand for the recognition of the neutral code. The British rejected the demand, proposing instead merely a restoration of treaties existing before the outbreak of war ; on the restoration of places they agreed, except for Trincomalee (pp. 204-5), which they feared might be ceded by the Dutch to the French (p. 207), and the third proposal was rejected point blank with the comment, which is not without its interest to-day, that " the observation in the third article upon the aggression of Great Britain can serve no purpose but of controversy and acrimonious recrimination " (p. 208).

Three weeks later the British government's attitude became stiffer. No admission of the principles of the neutral code was allowed ; the most they were prepared to do was to make the basis of Anglo-Dutch relations " the fairest interpretation of the well-known laws of nations " (p. 221), and in March all chances of the neutral code being recognised were destroyed by the refusal of an invitation from the King of Sweden that a congress should be held for its extension. In passing, it is interesting to note that the British government admitted that in certain circumstances they had actually benefited from the code, and that in the event of the war continuing it was prepared to have adopted some part of it (p. 227). As to Trincomalee, the negotiation was complicated on the British side by the town having been captured by Suffren after the negotiations had been begun, and therefore did pass after all into French hands. But the signature of the preliminaries of peace with France and Spain while the Dutch were merely in an armistice, gave the British an immeasurable advantage over the Dutch, of which Fox, the new Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was not slow to take advantage. He claimed that Trincomalee should be restored by France to Britain in accordance with the preliminaries, and made it a negotiable asset (pp. 228, 232), the assessment of which for some time occupied the new ambassador, Manchester. The price for the surrender of Trincomalee was to be Negapatam, then in the occupation of the Dutch, and only to be parted with in the last resource (pp. 232, 235), but which the British would leave

to the Dutch if the French would give up Tobago (p. 232). In May, to force the pace, Fox drew up the terms to be offered to the leisurely Dutch (pp. 234-6). They revealed the disadvantageous position in which the Dutch now found themselves, owing to their backwardness in the negotiations, and their internal dissensions. They were based on the Treaty of Westminster of 1674 only, thus recognising the Dutch right to Surinam; emphasised the duty of their ships to strike to the British flag in the Narrow Seas; all existing commercial treaties were to be cancelled; and on Negapatam, Fox said that if the surrender were so offensive to the Dutch, an equivalent could be found in Demerara and Essequibo. In fact the policy of Fox was guessed to be that peace must be made, if at all, on terms so repellent to the popular party in Holland that they would abandon the French alliance. The way, however, had already been prepared for peace between Versailles and The Hague, for Vergennes was bringing pressure on the Dutch, even as he had brought pressure on the Spaniards, and though the news that Negapatam had been abandoned and blown up gave an opportunity to Fox to attempt a piece of sharp practice in the event of the Dutch agreeing to cede Demerara and Essequibo in return (pp. 236-7), the almost interminable negotiation came to a period on 2 September 1783, when the preliminaries were signed allowing to the British Negapatam or an equivalent, freedom of trade in Far Eastern seas, and in the matter of the flag the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*<sup>1</sup>; while on their part they surrendered Trincomalee to the Dutch.

On the following day the definitive treaties between Great Britain and the two Bourbon powers were signed. As for the definitive treaty with Holland, the matter was taken out of Manchester's hands in October (p. 245) by the removal of the negotiation to The Hague where there was less chance of French interference; but eventually the definitive peace was signed at Paris on 20 May 1784. The Dutch, mainly owing to their cumbrous methods of negotiation, were largely left out in the cold by their allies, who were too anxious to reduce expenditure to care to be very altruistic in their diplomacy, and the mocking password "Negapatam and Versailles" undoubtedly revealed the soreness that was felt by the Stadtholder at the ultimate terms of peace. Great Britain had

<sup>1</sup> For all this, see P. Coquelle, *L'alliance franco-hollandaise contre l'Angleterre, 1735-1788*, Paris, 1902, cap. xviii.



every reason to congratulate herself on the result of these negotiations ; for faced with a great coalition, she had, at the price of the recognition of the independence of the colonies, dissolved it, and though she might feel sore at their loss, the terms she obtained elsewhere were not unsatisfactory to her pride. On the colonies there was little responsible idea of revenge, and the rapid revival of trade between them and Great Britain soothed the wounds she had sustained.

There remained the Imperial mediators, Austria and Russia, who had suggested that peace should be established by means of a congress, which was clearly not needed, now that direct negotiations had been initiated. Vergennes manifestly endorsed the spirit underlying the polished irony of FitzHerbert, that the two Courts "were too sincere in their wishes for a general pacification not to consent cheerfully to give up the share of glory that might have accrued to them for bringing it about, when it should appear that it was more likely to be brought to a speedy conclusion by being treated of at Paris, than if the negotiation were removed to Vienna or St. Petersburg."<sup>1</sup> But nearly a year later, it appeared that the mediating Courts were not to be content with so high-minded a part, and it was necessary to instruct Manchester to warn the Russian, Markoff,<sup>2</sup> that the proper policy of this country was to make an "intimate connexion" with the Northern Maritime powers, and that this would not be aided by any interference on the ground of mediation (pp. 233-4). Nevertheless, when the final meetings for the signature took place in August, they were held at the Austrian ambassador's in the presence of the Russians, Bariatinsky and Markoff, and all the Imperial envoys produced their powers of mediating. Though there was a slight difference of opinion as to the declaration to be signed by the mediating powers, Vergennes having drawn up one, and Mercy and Bariatinsky having each drawn up others, all passed well, the treaties were agreed as negotiated between the belligerent powers, and Manchester had the satisfaction of reporting that "no notice whatever was taken of the

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O., F.O. 27*, no. 3, p. 104 (FitzHerbert to Grantham, Paris, 7 Aug. 1782, no. 51).

<sup>2</sup> He was not the ambassador *en titre*. According to Manchester, the ambassador, Prince Bariatinski "does not appear to have been much intrusted with the real views of his Court. Mo<sup>r</sup>. Markoff seems to be the man of business." *P.R.O., F.O. 27*, no. 6, p. 405 (to Fox, Paris, 11 May 1783, no. 2).

neutral code, nor any new foreign matter proposed to be introduced into the treaties." Thus the *amour propre* of the mediating powers was saved,<sup>1</sup> and the belligerents gathered the fruit of their own labours.

In the six years that elapsed between the signature of the peace of Versailles and the fall of the old French monarchy, three crises of major importance affected the relations between Britain and France, all concerning the Low Countries. In the first, the British were interested spectators of the attempt of Joseph II to open the Scheldt to international navigation in spite of the express provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht. Though they naturally supported the Dutch contention, they had no cause of complaint against the French, who, divided in their desires to support their new allies, the Dutch, and their family connexion, the Emperor, decided in favour of the former with a vehemence that surprised the ministers of George III (see pp. 253-4). In the second, the Elector of Hanover joined the *Fürstenbund* formed by Frederick the Great, but was not called on to take any strong line against France (p. 255). In the third crisis a stronger line had to be taken. The support somewhat clumsily given to the patriot party in Holland by the new minister, Montmorin, brought Britain and France to the verge of war, but ended in the humiliation of France and the formation of the momentous Triple Alliance of 1788 (see pp. 265-302). Not that war would have been unpopular in France; as Arthur Young noted in 1787, the manufacturers of the north were hostile to the commercial treaty of 1786, which, ostentatiously neglected by British ministers, negotiated only under threat of embargo on British goods, and never taken up by Pitt till the last moment, remains perhaps the most salient monument of the liberal statesmanship pursued by Vergennes with the sympathy of Calonne.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 7, p. 5 (Manchester to Fox, Paris, 14 Aug. 1783, no. 35). See also G. F. Martens, *Recueil des traités . . . de l'Europe*, Göttingen, 1818, Vol. III, pp. 523-4.

<sup>2</sup> For all this in detail see Professor J. Holland Rose, *William Pitt and the National Revival*. An excellent summary will be found also in Professor J. H. Clapham's chapter in the *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, Vol. I. For the commercial treaty see also Charles Gomel, *Les causes financières de la révolution française*, Paris, 1893, cap. vii.





## WILLIAM ANNE KEPPEL, 2nd EARL OF ALBEMARLE

1749-1754

NOTWITHSTANDING the contemptuous remarks of Chesterfield about his abilities, this nobleman proved to be highly successful in the only diplomatic post he ever held, and he remains an outstanding example illustrating the truth of the motto of William of Wykeham in its most superficial sense. For if Chesterfield says that it is merely his "airs and graces" which made Albemarle Governor of Virginia, lieutenant-general and ambassador in Paris, Marmontel ascribes his success there to his "uniting what is best and most estimable in the character and manners of both English and French," while the thoroughness with which he carried out his orders, combined with his personal qualities, induced the home government to exert considerable pressure upon him to stay, reluctantly enough, in Paris. He ingratiated himself in a remarkable degree with the French Court, and his sudden death on 22 December 1754 so far moved Louis XV that he exclaimed: "C'est une grande perte pour moi."

In reading the despatches addressed to him by the Secretaries of State, the student should not forget that in order to obtain a full view of the motives actuating both Newcastle and Albemarle, it is indispensable for him to master the frequent and voluminous private letters that passed between them, which with all other correspondence of Albemarle in Paris, will be found in the Newcastle papers in the British Museum. As has already been mentioned, the extracts here printed from the British Museum are from the originals, not from office copies.

The secretary to the Embassy who preceded Albemarle by some months was Colonel JOSEPH YORKE, later Lord Dover, son of Lord

Chancellor Hardwicke. Although it might seem at first sight that he owed his appointment as secretary to the Embassy in Paris to the friendship between his father and Newcastle, he clearly had merits which justified his appointment to posts of diplomatic importance. Keene, in correspondence with Castres, calls him "one of the prettiest correspondents I ever met with" and "the prettiest young Minister in Europe" (Sir Richard Lodge, *Private Correspondence of Sir Benjamin Keene*, Cambridge, 1933, pp. 168 and 219). There is a full account of Yorke's life in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. In this mission he acted as *chargé d'affaires* until Albemarle's arrival, and remained at Albemarle's elbow until September 1751 when he was transferred to The Hague as minister and, later, became ambassador.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 90 (*King's Letters*) 15B, p. 205.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JOSEPH YORKE, APPOINTED "SECRETARY TO OUR EMBASSY WHICH WE INTEND SHORTLY SENDING TO" THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 16 January 1748/9.

[Formal.]

[Despatches from Bedford to Yorke, dated Whitehall, 16 (on the evacuation of the four Hainault towns) and 27 February (on northern affairs), 13 (on the young Pretender and northern affairs) and 20 (on German affairs) March, and 4 April 1749 will be found in *Correspondence of the 4th Duke of Bedford*, ed. Lord John Russell, London, 1843, Vol. II, pp. 3, 10, 14, 19, 22.]

(*B.M.*, *Add. MS.* 32817, fo. 20.)

JOHN, DUKE OF BEDFORD, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO YORKE

Whitehall, 8 May 1749.

. . . . . I have now His Majesty's orders to send you the following instructions to enable you to induce the French Court to join heartily with His Majesty in adjusting amicably those points which might (if left undetermined) disturb the harmony so happily, and I believe, sincerely, established between the two Crowns.

In the first place, with regard to the three islands of Sta. Lucia, St. Vincent and Dominica, the King is clearly of opinion that as they were by the agreement abovemention'd to have [been] evacuated by both nations respectively from the year 1730, the time that

agreement was made, and as by the article of the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle all things in both the Indies were to be put on the same footing, they were actually *or ought to have been* in before the commencement of the last war, he has undoubtedly a right to insist that the Most Christian King's orders of the 25th of November last to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Caylus be renewed, as His Majesty on his part will immediately cause similar orders to be sent to the Governor of Barbadoes to oblige the English who may possibly be settled in any of the 3 abovemention'd islands to evacuate them.

In the second place, with regard to Tobago (which, as it is not included in the agreement of 1730, His Majesty thinks that all negotiations relating to it should be kept distinct from any other matters in dispute) the King is convinced his pretensions to that island in opposition to those of the French are so well founded that he will have no objection to the appointment, at a proper time, of commissaries from each Court to take that point into consideration, but that in the meanwhile, the King thinks himself most justly entitled to insist that the French Court do immediately, in conformity to the promise made to you by the Marquis de Puyseulx and the Count Maurepas and of which you gave me an account in your dispatch of the 5/16 April, send orders for the entire evacuation of Tobago and the demolition of any forts or batteries that may have been erected there. This the King thinks himself not only entitled to by the abovemention'd promise of the French ministers, but by the very words of the 9th article of the Treaty of Aix, which words it is plain by the very concession of the French Court itself, are obligatory on each nation for putting things in that part of the world on the footing they were before the war; and it is as plain no settlement of Tobago was attempted by the French prior to the commencement of the late war. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, fo. 23.)

Whitehall, 8 May 1749.

Separate and private. All in cypher.

. . . . . What I now write is only to enable you to sound Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyseulx what his sentiments are in relation to this dispute, and thereupon to found (in case you find him in a good disposition) a negotiation for a convention in order to ascertain the neutrality for the time to come of the four islands now in question, viz<sup>t</sup>. Tobago, Sta. Lucia, St. Vincent and Dominica.

The King doth hope that the French Court may not be unwilling to enter into a convention of this nature, as Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Puitsieux declared to you in the conversation you had with him some time ago, and of which you give me an account in your dispatch of the 5/16 of April, that he did not look on the settlement of the island of Tobago as a thing very essential to their commerce, though at the same time he owned a settlement made there by them must be very detrimental to ours. This frank confession of the French minister should seem to give just ground to hope that he would not be averse to entering into such a convention with regard to all the four islands. . . . .

The little necessity the French have at present of making new establishments in the Charibbee islands affords some hopes that they will not be averse to this proposition, especially as I am persuaded you will be able plainly to evince to them that their agreeing to something of this nature will be the most probable way of preserving that union and harmony between the two Crowns for a series of years, which seems to be necessary for them both.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 232.)

Whitehall, 12 June 1749.

(All in cypher.)

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, having by His Majesty's order wrote to Mr. Keith transmitting to him an extract of your dispatch to me of the 1/12 April in which you propose the demanding the King of Prussia's guaranty of the definitive treaty<sup>1</sup> in case that Prince shall be disposed to avail himself of the 22<sup>d</sup> article of that treaty guarantying to him Silesia and the County of Glatz, and having directed him to sound the Austrian ministers thereupon, I herewith inclose to you an extract from Mr. Keith's letter to the Duke of Newcastle of the 20/31 of last month, by which you will see that the Court of Vienna shews not only a doubt of the Court of France's entering heartily into this measure with us, but also a coolness with regard to the measure itself, and an unwillingness in having the Empress's name mentioned unless there should be great probability of succeeding. The King thinks it necessary you should be thoroughly apprized of the sentiments of the Court of Vienna upon this subject, that you may be able to talk such a language to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Puitsieux as shall be agreeable to the ideas of

<sup>1</sup> Of Aix-la-Chapelle.

that Court with regard to the King of Prussia, in case that minister should at any time bring the 22<sup>d</sup> article of the definitive treaty, guarantying the King of Prussia's possessions, upon the tapis. In which case it is His Majesty's pleasure you shall always insist that in case the King of Prussia will avail himself of the guaranty given him in the 22<sup>d</sup> article, he shall fullfill the conditions he is, as *une puissance intéressée* mentioned in the 23<sup>d</sup> article, obliged to take upon himself, by guarantying the execution of the whole treaty *à toutes les puissances contractantes et intéressées*.

(*B.M., Add. MS. 33010, fo. 332.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WILLIAM ANNE, EARL OF ALBEMARLE, APPOINTED  
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE  
MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

Kensington, 12 June 1749.

[Formal.]

(*Ibid., fo. 328.*)

PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR WILLIAM ANNE EARL OF  
ALBEMARLE.

Kensington, 12 June 1749.

You shall upon your arrival at the Court of France endeavour to procure the most exact information of the present state of that country, and particularly with regard to their finances; what are the measures proposed for the better regulation of them and whether there are not appearances of some disturbances which may possibly prevent those measures from being easily carried into execution.

You will endeavour to inform yourself in the most particular manner of the true state and condition of their commerce and marine; the attention that is given to reestablish and increase them; the means proposed for doing it, and the time it will require before it can be effected.

You shall likewise endeavour to find out in what light the French ministers consider the treaty of commerce signed at Utrecht in 1713 and whether they do admit that the said treaty was renewed in the last definitive treaty signed at Aix-la-Chapelle. However in your enquiry you should use the utmost caution that no handle may be taken by the French Court from what you shall have said to them, to strike at the existence of this treaty which is here



understood to be virtually renewed, except in the eighth and ninth articles, which were conditional, and which conditions were not complied with on the part of England.

You will likewise inform yourself of the present state of their army, the effective number of their troops, the means proposed to increase or put them in motion, whenever it may be thought necessary, as also in what light the foreign marshals<sup>1</sup> are looked upon by the King, the ministry, the army and the nation.

You will endeavour to penetrate into the real views and system of France relating to the affairs of Europe and into any negotiations which may be carrying on between that Court and any other foreign powers; particularly how far they are likely to enter into the views of the King of Prussia, what steps they are taking for strengthening themselves in the Empire, whether they have any and what negotiations depending at the Porte or in Sweden, and whether there is any probability of their granting an advantagious commercial treaty to the Dutch.

You will likewise find out if possible the real views and sentiments of the French Court in relation to the West Indies; why the condition of appointing commissaries to examine and adjust Our disputes there has been of late annexed to the proposal that both Crowns should send their respective orders for the mutual evacuation of all the disputed islands; whether the French Court is really desirous of having these affairs determined in this manner, and for what reasons. In order to enable you to clear up these points, you will inform yourself most exactly of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Rouillé's capacity, disposition and power in the department of the marine.

But you will in general be extremely attentive in making yourself master of the interior state of the Court of France, in studying the passions and interests of the Princes of the Blood and other great persons of both sexes who are in any wise honoured with the friendship and confidence of His Most Christian Majesty, and in making the closest inquiries possible into the disposition and characters of the ministers of state, not only with regard to their pacifick or warlike inclinations, but to their particular connexions with one another, their views, their abilities, their power and the degree of influence each has or may have with the French King.

You will particularly remark whether Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Puyzieulx or Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Argenson has the ascendant in these respects, especially in the

<sup>1</sup> Saxe and Lowendahl.

last, and what are the points in which the interests of these two ministers are most likely to clash.

You shall regularly transmit to Our Principal Secretary of State by safe and proper conveyances an account of any lights you shall receive upon these heads that we may be able to send you such farther instructions thereupon as We shall judge most proper.

[A despatch on trade relations with France from Bedford to Albemarle, dated Whitehall, 3 August 1749, will be found in the *Correspondence of the 4th Duke of Bedford, ut sup.*, Vol. II, p. 40.]

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32818, fo. 9v.*)

BEDFORD TO ALBEMARLE.

Whitehall, 17 August 1749.

Separate.

. . . . I have now His Majesty's orders to acquaint Your Excellency that you should make remonstrances to the French ministers against the steps taken by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de la Galissonière the Governor of Canada as well as with regard to a settlement carried on by his orders on the River of St. John's in the province of Nova Scotia or Acadie, as to the treatment and restraint of some Indian prisoners of the Six Nations of the Iroquois who are in alliance and under the protection of Great Britain. I enclose to Your Excellency for your information copies of letters I have received from Governor Shirley and Lieut.-Col. Mascarene relating to this incroachment of the French on the River of St. John, which by their own way of reasoning the French cannot but disapprove, as it is in that part of the country the possession of which is in dispute between the two nations and consequently ought not, according to the doctrine laid down by them to be settled till the dispute of the right of possession be determined by the commissaries to whom it has been reciprocally agreed to refer it. I likewise enclose to Your Excellency a letter I have lately received from the Lords of Trade and Plantations relating to the latter particular, and inclosing several letters that have passed between Governor Clinton and the Governors and officers of the French King relating to the exchange of our prisoners and to attempts made by the French to debauch the Indians, our allies, from us. It is His Majesty's Pleasure that the strongest instances be made at the French Court against proceedings of this nature, and I must inform Your Excellency that I have His

Majesty's orders to direct Governor Cornwallis to prevent the French from making settlements on the River of St. John's or any other part of the province of Nova Scotia, till the right of possession shall be determined by the commissaries to whom it is referred. I shall shortly send Your Excellency some other complaints against the behaviour of the French in that part of the world, particularly with regard to some incursions their Indians have made from Crown Point, killing a man and making a boy prisoner, as likewise the threats of the Governor of Canada to make war against the Abeniqui Indians who are in alliance with us. But as I have not time at present, and I believe Your Excellency will be in the right to mention these things at first only in general in order that more pacifick directions may be sent to North America for putting things on a more friendly footing with us (in which case His Majesty will be willing to correspond by like friendly orders to his Governors) I will postpone for the present the troubling you any longer with the detail of these things which, though apparently trifling in themselves, may yet, if continued, produce the worst consequences.

P.S. Since writing what is above, I have received fresh letters from Governor Shirley, giving an account of new encroachments which are carrying on by the French on the back of our settlements and in His Majesty's territory, which plainly shews the necessity of immediate orders to be sent by the French ministry to their Governor in Canada, to prevent any more complaints of this nature which, if continued, must unavoidably cause ill will, and possibly altercations in that part of the world, which, if not timely prevented, may extend farther.

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32820, fo. 224.*)

Whitehall, 15 February 1749/50.

In my letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> inst. relating to the affairs of the North I had the honour of informing Your Excellency that the King still continued in the same pacifick sentiments and had omitted no endeavours to instill those sentiments into all his allies and particularly into the Court of Russia.

The Empress Queen (however she may unjustly be suspected of the contrary) has cordially joined in this laudable measure, and it is to be hoped that the joint representations the King's and Her Imperial Majesty's ministers have already [made], and will still



continue to make upon this head at Petersbourg, will be attended with all the success they deserve and prevent that power from being the first to disturb the tranquillity which is so happily established.

<sup>1</sup> However as it is certain that nothing is more likely to contribute to this great end than the pursuing the plan suggested by the King some time ago for that purpose, vizt. that England and France should speak to their respective Allies in a proper tone and give the most publick assurances of their engagements being purely defensive, the King is of opinion that a declaration of this sort might obtain the ends desired and at the same time quiet the apprehensions of those who may fear for the publick tranquillity and awe the ambition of others who may wish to see it disturb'd.

Your Excellency will therefore endeavour to find out (without committing the King's authority) whether Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyseulx would be averse to declaring in a formal manner to Your Excellency and to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Mareschall something to the purpose of what he flung out to you in conversation "that if Sweden was the aggressor, France "would not only not succour her but be the first *à lui jeter la "pierre."*

It is I daresay needless to suggest to Your Excellency that a proposal of this nature should be conducted with the greatest caution and dignity least it should be attributed to other motives than those it takes its rise from ; it will be proper therefore through the whole affair to act with becoming spirit, and at the same time that you shew the greatest desire of peace, to shew likewise a power and resolution of supporting a war should the circumstances of the time unfortunately make it necessary. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 3282I, fo. 332.*)

Whitehall, 4 June 1750.

Though I have had no opportunity of laying before the Lords Justices the inclosed dispatches from Governor Cornwallis which I received on Saturday last, the conduct of the French Governor of Canada appears by them so very extraordinary that I think it incumbent on me . . . . to apprise Your Excellency of it, as well as of the steps which it may (in my opinion) be proper for you to take upon this occasion.

Your Excellency will see that a French officer (La Corne) marches

<sup>1</sup> From here in cypher.

by the declared orders of the Governor of Canada to take possession by force of a tract of land as the property of the French King, which he allows at the same time to be in dispute, as he says he is to keep and defend it till the boundaries are settled by the commissaries appointed for that purpose. Nay, he does not stop here, but burns to ashes a town<sup>1</sup> which he himself owns to be the indisputable property of the King, carries all the inhabitants and their effects beyond the river and (in concert with Leutre, a French missionary) threatens all the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia, His Majesty's subjects, with a general massacre by the savages if they remain in the province. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32822, fo. 253v.*)

NEWCASTLE TO ALBEMARLE.

Hanover, 24 July/4 August 1750.

. . . . . The answer, which Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx gave to Your Excellency's representations, . . . . . his entire disavowal of Mo<sup>r</sup>. La Jonquière's proceedings, whom he treated as a madman, and "his acknowledgment that Chignecto and Beau-bassin were within the "peninsula and consequently that satisfaction ought to be given for "the damage done and security for the future if the facts were "proved" has (as you will see by the inclos'd extracts of my letters to the Duke of Bedford) given the King great satisfaction. But you will also see (by the inclosed account which I gave His Grace of a conversation I had with Mo<sup>r</sup>. Valory) that there was too much reason to apprehend that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx had in some measure alter'd his way of thinking upon this affair, and in order to justify the conduct of the Governor of Canada, was endeavouring to make Governor Cornwallis appear to be the aggressor. This suspicion appears now to be verify'd by the turn which the French ministers are attempting to give to it, and by the orders which Mo<sup>r</sup>. Rouillé has sent to Mo<sup>r</sup>. La Jonquière.

Your Excellency did very well in observing to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx how short those orders fell of what that minister had promised you, since it appears . . . . . that provisional orders had been promised for the evacuating any place that belongs to the King . . . . . and in Mo<sup>r</sup>. Rouillé's letter to Mo<sup>r</sup>. La Jonquière, there is not one single word of restitution or satisfaction. And you also did very right in declining to receive the answer which Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx offer'd to

<sup>1</sup> Beaubassin, at the head of the Bay of Fundy.

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give to your memorial, that having been so contrary to what had been promis'd you.

You will endeavour to pique Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx upon the great and essential difference between his conduct upon your laying these complaints before him and that, now, of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Rouillé, and shew him how much he is concerned for his own honor as well as for the preservation of the present union and good correspondence between the two Crowns to see the promises which he gave you, performed . . . . . and particularly you will desire that as the orders now sent to Mo<sup>r</sup>. La Jonquière are totally insufficient, new ones may be forthwith transmitted to him . . . . . and that duplicates may be given to you of those orders. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32824, fo. 153.*)

Hanover, 6/17 October 1750.

. . . . . Baron Vorster, the Imperial Minister here, did some time ago inform me . . . . . that Count Kaunitz (who I suppose is by this time arriv'd at Paris) had the strongest orders from his Court to act in concert with Your Excellency in everything that concern'd the general affairs of Europe, and that he was particularly charged to concert with you in what manner he, Count Kaunitz, should communicate to the Court of France the design which has been some time in agitation between Their Imperial Majesties, the King and several other Electors, of proposing the election of the Arch Duke Joseph to be King of the Romans; and as Count Kaunitz had (as I understand from Mo<sup>r</sup>. Vorster) actually received these instructions, things being now pretty far advanced, Count Coloredo has, by the Emperor's order, mention'd this affair to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Blondel, which communication Mo<sup>r</sup>. Blondel receiv'd in general but very civil terms.

His Majesty extremely approved this proper attention for the Court of France; but Your Excellency will easily see (and Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx himself must be sensible) that as this measure more immediately concerned Their Imperial Majesties, and as the Emperor must necessarily appear the first in it, it would have been highly improper for the King to have made any communication upon this subject before His Imperial Majesty had done it himself.

If Count Kaunitz has done anything in consequence of these orders, he will undoubtedly have previously acquainted Your Excellency with it, and concerted it with you. And as probably

Your Excellency will have done nothing in consequence (you having yet receiv'd no instructions from the King) it is His Majesty's pleasure that you should immediately acquaint Count Kaunitz with the contents of this letter, that, if nothing has been yet done, the communication may be made in such manner as shall be agreed between you; or, if Count Kaunitz has already taken any step with the French Ministers, that Your Excellency should then agree with him in what manner it may be proper for you to concur on the part of His Majesty in what he has done.

You will in either case acquaint Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx that the view of preserving the peace so happily establish'd by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle has been the chief motive that has induced His Majesty and the Court of Vienna to think of this measure, experience of antient times having often shew'd that nothing was so likely to kindle a war in Europe as the vacancy of the Imperial throne, and in that light (which is the true one) the King is persuaded the Court of France will see it.

If Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx should make any objection as to the method of proceeding or the legality of the measure proposed, Mo<sup>r</sup>. Kaunitz, from former precedents as well as from the laws and constitutions of the Empire, will undoubtedly be fully enabled to answer any objection of that kind.

I cannot conclude without acquainting Your Excellency that His Majesty has great confidence in Count Kaunitz's ability and good intentions, of which he has given most signal proofs in our late transactions at Vienna. Their Imperial Majesties have a great regard for him and a great dependance upon him. Your Excellency will therefore take an occasion to acquaint him with His Majesty's good opinion of him and great approbation of his conduct, and that for that reason you have the King's orders to act in the most perfect concert with him in everything that can regard the general affairs of Europe; that you are persuaded he will take no step without previously concerting it with you and that you on your part shall do the same with regard to him; that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Kaunitz is fully appriss'd from the King's minister at Vienna of His Majesty's system, which is, to establish the most perfect union, friendship and good correspondence between the Maritime Powers, the Court of Vienna, the well-intention'd princes of the Empire and the Empress of Russia; at the same time, that His Majesty would avoid doing anything that might give any just cause of complaint to the Courts of France

and Prussia ; that the great object now depending of the election of the Arch Duke to be King of the Romans (in which he, Mo<sup>r</sup>. Kaunitz, well knows the considerable part that His Majesty has had) is a proof of the one, as the proper and decent communication to France and Prussia is of the other. . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 237, fo. 169.*)

BEDFORD TO ALBEMARLE

Whitehall, 22 November 1750.

. . . . . It was with great concern the King perceived by the conversation that passed between Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx and you, the close union and concert that now actually subsist between the Courts of Versailles and Berlin, and that the answers given by each of those Courts on the great point now depending for the election of a King of the Romans, so exactly tally together as to leave no room to doubt of a previous concert between them. The only observable variation I find in the French minister's answer from that given by His Prussian Majesty is that in case there shall be an unanimous consent amongst the Electors for that choice, the French Court will not oppose it, which in reality is saying nothing, as by the language held to Your Excellency on this subject, Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx not only avows but commends the Prussian answer, which of itself alone must necessarily prevent the unanimity of the Electors which, could it have been effected, was all that the French Court promised not to oppose. Besides, was it possible to bring that event to bear (I mean the unanimity among the Electors) it would be in vain for France to oppose the election of the Archduke Joseph. The complaints thrown out by Mo<sup>r</sup>. Puyzieulx of His Majesty's not having communicated earlier to the Most Christian King his intentions upon this head, are in every respect unreasonable and unjust, as in the first place the King in his quality of Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, thinks himself under no obligation of communicating to any foreign Prince whatsoever the steps which he thinks proper to take in matters which relate solely to the Empire, and in the second, as King of Great Britain and in peace and friendship with His Most Christian Majesty, he has already ordered Your Excellency to make a friendly communication of this affair to the French Court in conjunction with Their Imperial Majesties' Ambassador, who, as they are most immediately con-



cerned in the success of this great event, ought naturally to be supposed to take the lead in the communication of it to a Court with which they are equally connected with the King. . . . .

[Despatches from Bedford to Albemarle dated Whitehall 26 November 1750 on trade relations with Spain, and 4 March 1750/1 (most secret and particular) on Ammon's mission to France, will be found in *Correspondence, ut. sup.*, Vol. II, pp. 61 and 73.]

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32827, fo. 207.*)

Whitehall, 11 April 1751.

That Your Excellency might be apprized as soon as possible of some difficulties which have been started by the Governor of Martinico with regard to the method of evacuating the four neutral islands, and which, if not timely remedied, may possibly frustrate the very intent of the agreement between the two Crowns, as the settlers are at present almost left to their own option to obey or not the orders of their Royal Sovereigns for want of some proper measure having been fixed on to enforce their obedience, I directed Mr. Aldworth to acquaint your Excellency therewith by the last post, that in case the French ministers should speak to you thereupon, you might have thrown out as from yourself, the difficulties which must of course attend every order of such a nature, unless the most rigorous measures are agreed on for the carrying of it into execution.

. . . . . You will observe from the inclosed copies of the papers which I have received from Governor Grenville upon this subject . . . . . that the first difficulty arose upon the manner of publishing the proclamations for the evacuations, the French Governor pretending that he was not authorized by his powers or instructions to have it fixed up in the publick places in the respective islands, notwithstanding Commodore Holbourne so strongly and so sensibly remonstrated to him that, since it was the intention of both Crowns to have the agreements for the evacuations punctually executed, it was not possible that the proclamations for that purpose could be made too publick.

This however was acquiesced in and the proclamations were only read in the most publick places in the several islands; indeed this was not a matter worth insisting upon, nor should I have taken any notice of it to Your Excellency, did not what afterwards



happened leave room to suspect that more might possibly be couch'd under it than the bare apprehension of the French Governor of exceeding the orders of his Court.

For with what colour of reason could he refuse to concur with Commodore Holbourne in executing as well as publishing the orders of their Royal Masters and that in the most essential point of all, the obliging of the settlers to obey them?

Upon his declaring to Commodore Holbourne that he could not in case of their disobedience *hunt them out like wild boars*, could the Commodore have been blamed if he had answer'd: "Then I must, for I can only look upon them at present as so many banditti or outlaws, and by no means as subjects of His Most Christian Majesty"?

However, as the King has always been averse to the taking any measure throughout this whole affair without the joint concurrence of the Court of France, His Majesty entirely approves the discretion with which Governor Grenville and Commodore Holbourne have both acted upon this occasion, and the more so, as the King is persuaded that these trifling chicaneries have taken their rise solely in America and will be entirely destroyed by the first orders that will be sent thither from France thereupon. But as it is necessary that these orders should be sent as soon as possible, Your Excellency cannot be too early in your application for that purpose, and should you meet with any unexpected difficulty in obtaining the most positive directions to the Governor of Martinico to concur with Governor Grenville in obliging all the English and French settlers in any and all of the four neutral islands to withdraw themselves and their effects . . . . the King would have Your Excellency declare, in case so reasonable and just a proposal should be refused, that His Majesty will find himself drove to the necessity of ordering his commanding officers in the West Indies to look upon all English and French settlers in those islands as banditti, and to treat them accordingly. . . . .

. . . . The King has with pleasure seized every opportunity in his power of giving the most publick marks of his attention and regard to any recommendation from His Most Christian Majesty; the orders for the evacuation of the island of St. Martin were no sooner asked than granted. Should any of the King's subjects dare to disobey them, His Majesty will no longer think them worthy his Royal protection. Upon Your Excellency's adding this particu-

lar, which is exactly a similar case with the four islands, the King is persuaded the French ministers must be struck with the justice of the present demand, and that the most positive orders will be immediately dispatched to the Governor of Martinico to concur with the Governor of Barbados in enforcing the most punctual obedience to the solemn agreement of both Crowns. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32828, fo. 189.*)

ROBERT, EARL OF HOLDERNESSE, SECRETARY OF STATE,  
TO YORKE.

Whitehall, 8 July 1751.

[Copy.] Secret.

I have His Majesty's permission to give you a full account of all that has pass'd with the Court of France upon the two important points which have made the subject of negociation for some time past, (vizt.) the means of preserving the peace of the North, and electing the Arch Duke Joseph to be King of the Romans; and, in order to put you clearly *au fait*, it will be necessary to look back to the time that the first communication of the steps His Majesty had taken as Elector in the affair of the election was made to the Court of France. You may very well remember that the French ministers then made no very material objections to it, tho' indeed they had reserved a back-door for future cavils by annexing the condition of the election's being made agreeable to the laws and constitutions of the Empire, which they might (as they have since done) interpret in their own way. However, it soon grew evident that they had altered their language and adopted the sentiments of the King of Prussia; they miss'd no opportunity of creating delay, and at last succeeded in persuading one of the most considerable princes of the Empire to break thro' the engagements he was under with the King.

Towards the end of the month of December last (upon a misapprehension or misrepresentation of something that pass'd between the Duke of Newcastle and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix), a hint was thrown out to my Lord Albemarle for removing the whole negociation to Paris. You will easily imagine that this thought was immediately rejected by the King, but even about this very time, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix in a conference with the Duke of Newcastle, owned that the King his master was not against the principles of this measure,

and would even co-operate with the King in bringing it to a conclusion, provided a sufficient security could be obtained for the preservation of the peace of the North, and a proper satisfaction for the allies of France. As to the peace of the North, His Majesty and the Empress Queen had given the strongest proofs of their desire to preserve it, and the readiness with which Her Imperial Majesty had procured the guaranty of the Empire for the Dutchy of Silesia in favour of the King of Prussia, and the discussion which was entered into at Vienna upon the demands of the Elector Palatine evidently shew'd a willingness on the part of the Court of Vienna to give any reasonable and just satisfaction to the princes in alliance with the Court of France; but notwithstanding this, Prussian artifices prevailed, and the excessive complaisance of the Court of France for that of Berlin induced them to alter their former way of talking. . . . . As the Court of France had thought proper to act a part so different from what might have been expected, the King was resolved to let things remain where they are, unless, by some new overture, the French ministers should of themselves give an opportunity of renewing the negociation.

I have lately had a conversation with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix, which he introduced by expressing his surprize that when both Courts were agreed upon the principle, vizt. the preservation of the peace, the means of doing it should have caused so much negociation. As to the election of a King of the Romans, he said there was indeed a time wherein his Court would not have obstructed it, but that the case was now something different. He complained that negociations had been carried on at Hanover last year relative to this great affair, without the participation of his Court; that no communication of the King's intentions thereupon had been made 'till we thought we had secured our point; he observed that the method proposed to be follow'd was repugnant to the laws of the Empire in two instances, first by supposing the election to be valid if obtained by a majority of voices in the Electoral Colledge; secondly, by making the Electors of the Empire the only judges of the expediency of proceeding to such an election without the advice or concurrence of the Princes of the Empire. I differed very widely in opinion with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix upon both of these points, and I cannot better make you master of the argument on both sides than by the inclosed printed book entitled *An impartial representation of the legal method of proceeding* in the like cases.

M<sup>or</sup>. de Mirepoix ended his discourse with some expressions which seem'd to have a tendency to renew the negociation upon this great object. If this was really his intention, it is not impossible but that something of the same kind may fall from M<sup>or</sup>. de Puyzieulx. Hitherto, His Majesty thinks, there is no reason to alter the resolution he has taken of dropping for the present all *pourparlers* with the Court of France upon this point, and it is the King's pleasure that you should conduct yourself accordingly, in any conversation you may have with the French ministers, though at the same time, you will be very attentive to anything that may fall from them, which you will only take *ad referendum*, and transmit to me an account of what shall pass. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32830, fo. 262.*)

HOLDERNESSE TO ALBEMARLE.

Whitehall, 10 October 1751.

Separate.

Having had an interesting conversation with the Duc de Mirepoix, and having found that His Excellency had talked in the same strain to the Duke of Newcastle, I think it right to send you now an account of it. After mentioning some trifling points still in agitation and which will very soon be adjusted, the French Ambassador asked me what the Court of France was to think of the negociation supposed to be carrying on between those of Vienna and Madrid under the mediation of the King, and whether I had anything to say to him upon that subject. I told him I had nothing to say upon it, but that I knew all His Majesty's views tended to the preservation of the peace upon the foot of the definitive Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, and, as long as the King acted upon that and no other motive, there could be no reasonable ground for jealousy in any other power. The French Ambassador replied that if what the world said was true, that these supposed measures taking in Spain tended to the neutrality of Italy in case of a rupture, the King his Master could not but be much obliged to us, for relieving him from the necessity of sending an army there in case of new disturbances, and consequently enabling him to act with more vigour in other parts of the world, (but then added more gravely) as it was plain the King is taking all these precautions against his Court, I could not wonder to find him inquisitive upon so important a subject ; but that however the King his master relied

so much upon his alliances both of blood and interest which unite their Most Christian and Catholick Majesties that he believed his Court did not much apprehend our being able to make any considerable progress at Madrid, or that the King could ever be able to engage that Court to take any part in opposition to the interest of France.

The same language having been held to the Duke of Newcastle, His Grace told Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix that there was another point much more likely to alter the present friendship which so happily subsists between His Majesty and the Most Christian King than any negotiation that could be now carrying on in Europe, vizt. the disputes subsisting between the two Crowns in Africa and America, and that it were much to be wished that those important and national points might be brought to a conclusion before things went too far, and that as hitherto the Commissaries had done nothing but wrangle without being able to finish anything, His Grace would repeat, what he had once before suggested, that either the Duc de Mirepoix should be instructed to that purpose, and authorized to negotiate these affairs with the King's ministers here, or that the Court of France should consent to adjust them with Your Excellency at Paris. The French Ambassador seemed to agree in opinion with the Duke of Newcastle, and promised to renew the representations he had already made upon that head, and said that neither Crown ought to be possessed of such places as made the possessions of the other precarious. The Duke of Newcastle did not agree with this reasoning, as it plainly tended to the advantage of the French in North America, but insisted very rightly that the Treaty of Utrecht, lately renewed by that of Aix la Chapelle, should be the basis of such a negociation, which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix agreed to, but said there might be a difference of opinion as to the construction of the treaty, which was thus laid down to be the basis of the whole transaction. . . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *B.M., Add. 32830, fo. 232 v.* (Newcastle to Albemarle, Newcastle House, 4 October 1751 (very private) [holog.]) “. . . . I think (and so do *most* people here) that it will be the most popular and the most glorious work for this nation that has been concluded these many years, a defensive alliance, *Quadruple alliance* between England, *Spain*, the H. of Austria and the King of Sardinia, and that in a measure arising from Spain itself, is what has never happened before in this century, and differs much from our joint measures twenty years ago with France and Spain, both in their appearance and their consequences. . . . .”



(*B.M., Add. MS. 32832, fo. 191.*)

Whitehall, 12 December 1751.

The treaty lately concluded between His Majesty and the King of Poland,<sup>1</sup> which unites six voices in the Electoral College, seems to be the chief object of the King of Prussia's attention and jealousy, and as that prince will certainly endeavour to defeat the intended election of a King of the Romans, it is to be supposed that the journey of the Elector of Cologne and of the Elector Palatine to Munich is with a design, if possible, to draw the Elector of Bavaria from his present engagements with His Majesty. Your Excellency will see by the enclosed copies of letters which have passed between Mr. Burrish<sup>2</sup> and the Duke of Newcastle how little reason there is to fear the success of such an attempt; however I must beg of Your Excellency to endeavour to find out what are the present sentiments of the Court of France as to the election of a King of the Romans, and whether they are privy to the views of the two above-mentioned Electors upon this occasion. . . . .

[For a despatch of Holderness to Albemarle on the Silesian loan question, dated 12 December 1751, see Sir Ernest Satow, *The Silesian loan and Frederick the Great*, Oxford, 1915, p. 243.]

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32833, fo. 406.*)

Whitehall, 13 February 1752.

Most secret.

The conduct of the Court of France as to the general system of affairs is of late so very mysterious, and there appears such an affectation of silence in all the French ministers upon the grand affair of an election of a King of the Romans that I have His Majesty's commands to renew the instructions formerly sent Your Excellency upon this head, and to desire you would be extremely watchful of any circumstance which might tend to clear up the real views and intentions of the Court of Versailles upon this important subject.

<sup>1</sup> Signed September 13, N.S., 1751 at Dresden. (For the circumstances in which this treaty was signed see D. B. Horn, *Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams and European Diplomacy*, Chap. V.)

<sup>2</sup> Minister at the Court of Bavaria. He was ordered (*B.M., Add. 32832, fo. 193, Newcastle to Burrish, Whitehall, 10 December 1752*) to prevent any agreement between the three Wittelsbach Electors whereby the Elector of Bavaria would be detached from his engagements to Great Britain.



This letter . . . . is grounded upon the certain intelligence His Majesty has lately received, that the French ministers have not looked upon the explanations given to the Duke de Mirepoix as to what passed in Parliament upon the Saxon Treaty as satisfactory, but rather seem to adopt the language of that minister's first dispatches upon that subject than of those that followed, and that the French Court *n'avoient jamais pris le change sur les dispositions du ministère britannique et savoit à quoi s'en tenir, que Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne se donneroit bien garde de traiter cette matière vis à vis les ministres d'Angleterre, que son intention étoit que son ambassadeur en Angleterre ne témoignâ pas le moindre mécontentement et qu'il évitâ même de rien toucher sur l'élection dans ses conférences ; que Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne suivroit à cet égard le parti qu'Elle jugeroit convenable à sa dignité et à ses intérêts.* And their emissaries ask *comment les ministres anglois peuvent-ils s'imaginer qu'on les en croira à leur parole qu'ils ne font rien contre les constitutions de l'Empire, tandis que jusqu'icy ils les ont si manifestement violées, puisqu'ils ne peuvent disconvenir avoir acheté les suffrages de la plupart des électeurs, par où la condition principale pour procéder valablement à l'élection, qui est la liberté des suffrages, se trouve enfreinte ; d'un autre côté toutes les menées actuelles dans l'Empire et les tentatives qu'on y fait pour faire mettre sur le tapis l'élection pendant le séjour du Roy à Hanovre prouvent assez, et plus qu'il ne faut, les véritables dispositions où on est à Londres.*

This, my Lord, His Majesty is informed from very good authority is the present language of the Court of France and their adherents, or rather, of that of Berlin, adopted by France. Your Excellency may remember how differently this measure was received at Versailles when first it was thought of, nor did their sentiments alter till the King of Prussia found means to have an influence over all their councils not quite consistent with that dignity they boast of upon other occasions.

The King is persuaded Your Excellency will make the discreetest use of this intelligence, in case the French ministers should give you an opportunity of entering into conversation with them upon this material point.

(B.M., *Add. MS.* 32834, *fo.* 308.)

Whitehall, 26 March 1752

The packet boat which brought Your Excellency's letters of the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst. N.S. having been forced into Ostende by contrary winds and tempestuous weather, I did not receive them 'till Sunday morning last.<sup>1</sup> I have now the satisfaction to be able to acquaint Your Excellency with His Majesty's entire approbation of your conduct in the conversation you had with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>e</sup>. Contest, and of which you transmitted an account in the above-mentioned letter. The whole nicety of the question upon the proposed election of a King of the Romans depended entirely upon the different sense given by different princes as to the *legal* manner of proceeding in that measure, the French ministers have now declared their sense upon this point so clearly and explicitly as leaves no room to suppose they will think of giving any obstruction to it.

The Duke of Newcastle and I have by His Majesty's command had a conference this morning with the French Ambassador, when I read over to that minister Your Excellency's letter relating the conversation you have had with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>e</sup>. Contest, and shewed him that the French ministry had not objected to the interpretation given by His Majesty and the other Electors in alliance with the King, to the words *legal election*, vizt., that neither the unanimity of the Electoral College nor the consent of the College of Princes are necessary to form a legal and constitutional election, but that a majority of voices in the Electoral College *only* is sufficient as well for the election of a King of the Romans as for that of an Emperor. We observed to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix that all that his Court seem at present to desire is to obtain some satisfaction in favour of the Elector Palatine, and that some decent regard should be had to the King of Prussia; that we were ready to acquaint him with His Majesty's thoughts upon these points and had set down in writing the words which the King had permitted us to make use of upon this occasion, which are as follows:—*Le Roy a ordonné au Duc de Newcastle et au Comte de Holdernesse d'informer Mo<sup>r</sup>. le Duc de Mirepoix que Sa Majesté a appris avec beaucoup de plaisir par le rapport d'une conversation qui s'est passée entre son Ambassadeur et Mo<sup>r</sup>. le Marquis de St<sup>e</sup>. Contest, les sentimens pacifiques où se trouve le Roy Très-Chrétien, et particulièrement au sujet de l'élection d'un Roy des Romains; que le Roy n'a jamais eu l'intention*

<sup>1</sup> 22 March, O.S.

*d'avancer cette élection par d'autres moiens que ceux qui seront parfaitement conformes aux loix et aux constitutions de l'Empire, et voit, avec une satisfaction extrême, que Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne lui rend justice à cet égard, et le Roy Très-Chrétien peut toujours s'assurer de toute sorte de réciprocité et de retour de la part de Sa Majesté.*

*Que quand aux prétensions de l'Electeur Palatin, toutes exorbitantes comme elles sont reconnuës d'être, le Roy seroit bien aise de Lui en procurer quelque satisfaction et tâchera même de faire en sorte que cette satisfaction s'obtienne par la cession du fief de Pleistein avec quelques dédommagemens pour la demande de la (sic) comté de Falkenstein ; qu'à cet effet, Sa Majesté enverra d'abord les instructions convenables à ses ministres à la Cour de Vienne, auxquels rien ne pourroit donner plus de poids que si Sa Majesté Irès-Chrétienne ordonnoit à Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Hautefort, d'assurer en même tems la Cour de Vienne, qu'à cette condition, le Roy Très-Chrétien acquiesceroit à l'élection. Que quand à ce que Mo<sup>r</sup>. de S<sup>t</sup>. Contest a proposé à l'égard du Roy de Prusse, le Roy, comme Electeur, ne peut pas faire une démarche de cette nature, mais que Sa Majesté proposera à l'Empereur et à l'Impératrice, qu'elle se fasse de leur part, comme étant les parties principalement intéressées. Que le Roy est prest à se joindre au Roy Très Chrétien dans la proposition à faire au Roy de Prusse, Sa Majesté, comme Roy, tout comme Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne, n'ayant d'autre intérêt dans cette affaire que par le grand rapport qu'Elle a avec l'affermissement de la tranquillité publique.*

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix promised to make an exact report to his Court of what passed in this conversation, and seemed to have no doubt but that the Most Christian King would readily and chearfully adopt what is herein suggested, and which indeed contains all that the Court of France have ever pretended to have in view upon this material subject ; and if they should now adopt the friendly overture made by the King, I hope to hear from Your Excellency very soon, as it cannot be supposed that His Majesty will suffer this legal measure to be protracted for any considerable time by an intervening negotiation. . . . .

(B.M., Add. MS. 32835, fo. 294.)

NEWCASTLE TO ALBEMARLE.

Hanover, 27 April/8 May 1752.

. . . . . As the last conference related singly to our commercial and territorial disputes in America, and is quite upon a different

subject, and ought to have no sort of connection with the former,<sup>1</sup> the King is apprehensive that the Court of France may now intend to make their consent or acquiescence in the affair of the election depend upon the adjustment to their satisfaction of the particular national points which are in dispute between us, which would be putting such a clog upon the other negotiation as must tend entirely to defeat the part which it was proposed that France should take to shew their acquiescence in the election.

The length of time which must unavoidably be taken up in the examination and settlement of points of such consequence, and (from the manner in which the French conceive them) of such difficulty also, will necessarily prevent any effect from the negotiation now on foot relating to the election, as, in all events, the election will be to be brought on this summer.

The measures which the King now looks upon to be agreed between him and His Most Christian Majesty are that the French King should acquiesce in the election of the Arch Duke Joseph this summer on condition that a reasonable and moderate satisfaction should be given to the Elector Palatine<sup>2</sup> . . . . and that a civil application should be made to the King of Prussia or his concurrence, *qu' on lui fit la politesse de demander son concours.*

As to the first, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Hautefort and the King's ministers at Vienna were jointly to apply to the Court of Vienna that Their Imperial Majesties would grant such a satisfaction as is above mention'd to the Elector Palatine, on which condition Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Hautefort was to declare that His Most Christian Majesty would acquiesce in the election.

As to the other point, the Court of Vienna was to make the *civil* application to the King of Prussia, and His Majesty (as King) and the French King were to join . . . . *dans l'appui de cette proposition au Roy de Prusse.* The time and manner of making these two joint applications are, I understand, to be settled with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergenne,<sup>3</sup> for which purpose Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergenne was expected here the 2<sup>d</sup> of this month.

After this, Your Excellency will not wonder that His Majesty

<sup>1</sup> The proposed election of a King of the Romans.

<sup>2</sup> See Holderness's letter of 26 March.

<sup>3</sup> Appointed to be French resident at Hanover during George II's residence there.



should be surprised that neither of these points seems to be in a way of being soon settled, the time of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergenne's coming being still uncertain. And what increases the King's uneasiness and surprise is to see that there is reason to fear that the acquiescence of France in the election is to depend upon the adjusting of our American disputes, which would certainly defeat the former and greatly obstruct the latter, as it would not fail to create some doubts of the sincerity of their intention to come to an accommodation upon the national disputes upon a reasonable and equitable foot, and as if they hoped to gain advantages in one by their facilities in the other, which cannot be admitted by the King and is not agreeable to the fair frank manner in which that affair has been treated by the two Courts from the beginning. Each point, being of a very different nature must be treated by itself, and . . . . it would be very unreasonable that the one which may be finish'd in one single conference, and is in effect agreed already, should be postponed for the other, which must necessarily take up a length of time.

. . . . . If Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergenne be not yet set out . . . . . you will press the immediate departure of that minister with proper instructions, or otherwise the end of his mission will be disappointed singly by the delay.

There is also another way of accounting for these delays, which would be the worst of all, vizt., that after all the Court of France have said to the King, they will not finally conclude anything with His Majesty without knowing the sentiments of the King of Prussia. If they will in this manner suffer themselves to be so far governed by His Prussian Majesty as not to take one step of consequence without his consent, they may be assured that the King of Prussia will never let them do one solid act for the preservation of the publick peace, and a new war may be kindled in Europe purely to gratify the restless ambition of that prince, contrary even to the French King's own views and inclinations. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32836, fo. 80.*)

Hanover, 13/24 May 1752.

Secret.

. . . . . You may imagine how much His Majesty was surprised (not to say offended) at Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest supporting to a degree

everyone of the Elector Palatine's demands.<sup>1</sup> I can add nothing to what I have already wrote to Your Excellency upon that subject. . . . I doubt not but that Your Excellency has produced the proofs to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest that these demands were neither mentioned nor hinted at to M<sup>r</sup>. Burrish by Baron Wrede when he trusted him with the *ultimatum* of his Court. . . . It was upon this *ultimatum* that our negotiation with the Duc de Mirepoix was principally founded, and I doubt not but that Your Excellency expressed your surprize to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest that he should be now supporting these new and extravagant demands of the Elector Palatine when the same Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest had told you upon reading my Lord Holderness's letter of the 26th of March *That he flatter'd himself that the Elector Palatine would be brought to accept the satisfaction proposed to be made him in the shape mention'd in that letter.*

Your Excellency will in consequence of this letter and your former orders, and agreeably to what I write to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix declare to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest that it is impossible for His Majesty to give in to these exorbitant demands or even to treat upon many of them. I perceive indeed that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest is pleased to say that some mitigation of the demands upon England and Holland may be admitted; but even for that he could not answer. Your Excellency may appeal to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest himself whether, since this negotiation has been depending, any mention has been made by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest to you of any demand of the Elector Palatine, either upon England or Holland? And yet Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest has not only expressed his approbation of what had passed with the King's ministers upon that subject, but had declared to Your Excellency "that His Most Christian Majesty would order Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes "to propose that the demands of the Elector Palatine on the "Court of Vienna should be refer'd to His Majesty's consideration." And is it possible to imagine that there could be any question then upon the particular demands upon His Majesty when no mention was at that time or had been before made of them? And

<sup>1</sup> viz. for (1) the restitution of Pleistein and the cession of Falkenstein and Ortenau, (2) a sufficient indemnity, (3) the privilege *de non appellando*, and (4) £50,000 from England and 500,000 florins from Holland. St<sup>t</sup>. Contest considered the money demands exorbitant, but the others to be not worth quarrelling about (see *P.R.O., S.P.* 78, no. 244, ff. 68-71. Albemarle to Newcastle, Paris, May 13/24, 1752).



the King himself was proposed by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest to be the sole referee?

The King however is willing to hope that the general reference of the Elector Palatin's demands to His Majesty, if accepted by the Court of Vienna, may still remove these difficulties; otherwise the confidence proposed to be placed in the King was mere words and never intended to be carried into execution but upon their own terms and their own conditions. It is a good sign that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest did not in this conference either revoke the reference made to the King or clog it with any condition whatever, so that that proposal is to be look'd upon still to remain entire.

His Majesty was willing to have overlook'd a most extraordinary circumstance in this transaction, vizt. that on Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. N.S. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest did acquaint Your Excellency that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes should receive orders to that purpose, that the Duc de Mirepoix in his letter to me of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. N.S. did say: *Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes est parti, muni de toutes les instructions que vous avez désiré [sic]*, and that to this hour he has not one single word from his Court upon any one of these points and has told me in confidence that he did not see Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest for above five minutes after the Duc de Mirepoix's arrival, and I don't find that anything material passed then. The poor man is mortified and confounded to the last degree. He has own'd that he must appear to me in a very extraordinary light. He has seen Your Excellency's letter of the 24 April/5 May. He has seen the Duc de Mirepoix's letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. N.S. and he said that I must either think that his Court has no confidence in him (tho' sent hither upon a confidential commission) or that he has used me very ill in concealing orders and instructions from me which he knew would be very agreeable. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes is much embarrass'd. He does not know what to write. He ask'd my advice, and indeed I don't know what to advise him. But notwithstanding all this, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest's declaration to Your Excellency was so explicit, and the Duc de Mirepoix's letter to me in the main was so satisfactory, that the King was willing to hope that the omission of sending the orders promised to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes might not be attended with any ill consequences; but Your Excellency's letter which I received yesterday with an account of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest's extraordinary support of the Elector Palatin's exorbitant demands, gives reason

to suspect that this total silence to their minister here was not purely accidental.

I am persuaded by Your Excellency's letter (wherein you say "that you hope Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes's arrival at Hanover will have "removed the several apprehensions that there were") that you will be greatly surprised to hear that instead of removing them they are and must be greatly increased by it. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32836, fo. 297v.*)

Hanover, May 24/June 4, 1752.

Apart.

. . . . . There is a point mention'd in my Lord Holderness's letter which is of the utmost importance, and that is the *demolition of the fort at Crown Point situated at the head of Lake Champlain which is built upon His Majesty's territory in the province of New York, very near the town of Albany, and very obnoxious to His Majesty's plantations.* When it may be proper to start that point I cannot pretend to say, probably not at first; but in a negotiation, the foundation of which (as the King's servants in England observe) is, *that the rights on either side should not be too strictly adhered to, but that means should be found for a mutual security of the undisputed possessions of each Crown,* it would be very extraordinary that a fort of so much consequence to the security of His Majesty's colonies, built, as is observ'd, upon His Majesty's territory in the province of New York, and taken possession of by the French since the peace of Utrecht, should be suffer'd to remain.

Some concessions to be sure the French will insist upon on the part of His Majesty, and if the King shall think proper to consent to them upon condition that His Majesty's northern Colonies be left secure and not liable to any attack, I conclude the demolition of this fort will be one of the points the most necessary to stipulate for the security of His Majesty's Colonies.

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32837, fo. 104v.*)

Hanover, June 10/21, 1752.

. . . . . The present conduct of France, combin'd with what has formerly passed, might give reason to suspect (if there were such a disposition) that their constant design has been to defeat the election; that at first, to prevent our having an *eminent majority*, they bought off the Elector of Cologne; that when His Majesty

had more than replaced that defect by the Elector of Saxony, the Court of France had nothing then to do but by shewing a seeming inclination to concur, to propose at first a condition which was plausible, and afterwards to turn that in such a manner as they might hope would totally defeat the election, or (which was the same thing) protract and delay by a tedious negotiation the conclusion of it. And in fact we do know for certain that upon our treaty with Saxony the first thought of France and Prussia was to delay the election without openly opposing it, and with that view the Electors of Cologne and Palatine made their visit to Munich; and to obviate anything of this kind, the Earl of Holderness in his letter to Your Excellency of the 26th of March (of which you made a translation to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de S<sup>t</sup>. Contest) said *that it could not be supposed that His Majesty would suffer this legal measure (of the election) to be protracted for any considerable time by an intervening negotiation.* But however, I hope that the future conduct of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de S<sup>t</sup>. Contest will shew that there is no foundation for these suspicions, and that they really wish to have this affair accommodated and will do their part towards it. . . . .

(B.M., Add. MS. 32839, fo. 89v.)

Hanover, 26 July/6 August 1752.

Very secret.

. . . . . The Court of Vienna might have obtain'd the unanimity of the Electors if they would have sacrific'd a small sum of money in comparison of the greatness and advantage of the object, and they might, without any hazard, have, originally, proceeded legally and constitutionally to the election with their eminent majority, if they had not raised groundless difficulties themselves, infused them into others, and, by their backwardness, obstinacy and delays encouraged France and Prussia to threaten such an opposition to it as makes such a measure at present very unadvisable.

His Majesty's conduct will, I am persuaded, appear justified to all the world. These declarations will set it above imputation in every respect and perhaps bring about the object desired.

To believe Baron Vorster (who was extremely struck when I read him the answer) it will have that effect: but in that case the Court of Vienna must be assur'd that nothing more shall be ask'd but civil applications for the King of Prussia and the Elector of Cologne or indeed for any other power.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Wrede answers that the Elector his master once satisfied, the King of Prussia and the Elector of Cologne will concur without any further demand.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes told me . . . . that he had now better hopes of the election than ever and had wrote word so to his Court. I suppose they have got some notion of my Lord Hyndford's recall, and the resolution that the King has taken to let the affair drop for the present if the Court of Vienna should still refuse to give a reasonable satisfaction for the Elector Palatine. . . .

If Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>e</sup>. Contest should ask you what further steps His Majesty intends to take, you will tell him that your orders are confin'd to what relates to the Elector Palatine and to the answers which have been given by the Court of Vienna to the strong instances which have been made by His Majesty in his favor.

I have a notion that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Wrede begins to fear that the election may drop and his master get nothing. . . . . He own'd to me that he was in a close correspondence with Mo<sup>r</sup>. Podewils, that the King of Prussia had also declared that he would make no demand, that His Prussian Majesty had had an inclination to have made use of this opportunity to have the matter of receiving the investitures settled to his satisfaction, but that upon Mo<sup>r</sup>. Wrede's representations, he had absolutely dropt it. Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Assebourg's discourse with me so far agreed with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Wrede's that he told me again that their demands should not obstruct the election. . . . . I can't say that either of these Electoral ministers gave me much reason to think that the Court of France would interest themselves so as to get difficulties removed, and indeed I never imagin'd they wou'd. All that we can expect is that they should not foment them or unreasonably support them. . . . .

On Tuesday night the messenger which I had sent above five weeks ago to Munich return'd hither. The Court of Manheim have been playing all their tricks to engage the Elector of Bavaria to support their interests ; and they persuaded him to send very absurd instructions to Count Haslang for that purpose, of which I had some hint from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Wrede, and of which I doubt not but Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes has sent a very pompous account to his Court. But upon the strong representations which M<sup>r</sup>. Burrish has made against it, the Elector of Bavaria (who is in himself a very honest man and very desirous to keep his word) has sent by this messenger additional instructions to Count Haslang directing

him to make strong representations to the King in favour of the Elector Palatine ; but if they should not have their desired effect, Count Haslang was in all events to conform himself both as to the convocation of the diet, and in every thing else, to what should be agreed by the ministers of His Majesty, the Empress Queen, the King of Poland, and of the Electors of Mayence and Treves who are expressly to compose the eminent majority.

If Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest should say anything to you relating to the Elector of Bavaria you will give him this account, which is strictly true in every part of it.

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32840, fo. 302.*)

Hanover, 12 October 1752.

. . . . Tho' Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest's language is a little alter'd for the better, it is not what might have been expected from the account which he own'd himself he had received, of the Elector Palatine's entire approbation of the ultimatum, which with a civil application to the King of Prussia for his vote, was, I must insist, the sole condition of the French King's acquiescence in the election. And for the truth of this, I will appeal to the Duc de Mirepoix, and Your Excellency may, if it is proper, appeal to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest himself.

The inclosed copies of my correspondence with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Wrede will show Your Excellency the new turn which the Court of Manheim has now taken in insisting to know previously the contents of the answer of the Court of Vienna, and my answer of the 11<sup>th</sup> inst. to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Wrede's last letter (both which, if Your Excellency pleases, you may read to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest) will shew how unreasonable this proceeding is, and the necessary consequences which will attend it, if persisted in, as by that means the Elector Palatine will lose all hopes of procuring any satisfaction or advantage.

Your Excellency will see by the inclosed copy of my letter to my Lord Holderness, the reason I have to think, almost to a demonstration, that this last idea was suggested by France ; but you will take no notice of that circumstance to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest.

The King of Prussia, as well as the Elector of Cologne, have certainly sent their approbation and consent to the Elector Palatine ; and I have reason to think that the Court of France themselves have strongly approved the ultimatum. But notwithstanding these publick declarations of the approbation both of France and Prussia



(which perhaps were given upon a presumption that the Court of Vienna would not have come so near as they do) the King of Prussia, and France at his instigation, will endeavour by all the ways that can be invented, to delay the coming to a conclusion.

Your Excellency will therefore take it for granted, that after a formal declaration of the Elector Palatine's satisfaction, after the reason there is to think that both the King of Prussia and the Elector of Cologne have declared to the Elector Palatine their approbation also, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest will no longer have a difficulty in declaring the acquiescence of France in the election, as soon as the Elector Palatine is satisfied. Much more might be expected from them in consequence of their repeated promises and assurances to the King; but this is what one would think cannot in decency be deny'd.

I send you, for your own information only, a minute which I took down from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vorster, containing the substance of the answer of the Court of Vienna.<sup>1</sup> Considering how loose the article relating to the equivalent for Ortenau was penn'd, and the objection which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest made to it upon that account, (tho' loose as it is, it is accepted by the Elector Palatine and approved by his allies)—I say, considering that circumstance, the certainty of a fief tho' perhaps not near of the same value, may in reality be better than such a precarious assurance as was stipulated in that article. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32840, fo. 343.*)

Hanover, 18 Oct. 1752.

. . . . . Count Rex has been with me this morning and appear'd to be under very great anxiety. He told me that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de la Touche, having acquainted the King of Prussia with the sentiments of the French King upon the declaration made by His Prussian Majesty upon the subject of the *Steuer* and having shew'd how much His

<sup>1</sup> The Court of Vienna would agree to pay in addition to the 500,000 fl. already agreed, another 100,000 fl. to grant Pleistein to the Elector Palatine and the House of Zweibrücken in the same manner as held by the late Elector Palatine, but no promises would be made about territorial superiority; to grant the *privilegium de non appellando* as *illimitatum* for the Palatine House; as for the House of Zweibrücken it would depend upon complaisant behaviour; for Ortenau or an equivalent Vienna would offer the expectative of Wildenau; the consent of France not to be necessary to this treaty nor unanimity among the Electors (*ibid.*, ff. 315 and 316).



Most Christian Majesty wish'd that affair might be accommodated, the King of Prussia said : “ *Je ne peux pas répondre autrement que “ je n'ai déjà fait par le mémoire donné au ministère saxon ” ; et après lui tourna le dos.* Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Malzan, the Prussian minister at the Court of Dresden, talking upon that subject to Count Bruhl, said, *Eh ! bien donc, Monsieur, vous voulez rompre la paix ? Il faut que le Roy mon maître prenne d'autres mesures.* This affair becomes so serious that the King apprehends very bad consequences may arise from it and the peace of the Empire be disturbed if the Court of France do not interpose effectually their good offices with the King of Prussia to prevent it. It is for that reason that His Majesty has ordered that Your Excellency should be informed of the representations made here by Count Rex, and you will make a proper use of them with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest, taking care however not to appear as a principal, but only in a proper manner to support Count Loss's instances.

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32841, fo. 393.*)

HOLDERNESSE TO ALBEMARLE.

Whitehall, 28 December 1752.

. . . . Having thus laid before Your Excellency the very small difference which remains between what the Court of Vienna now offers<sup>1</sup> to give and what the Elector Palatine demands, I can only beg of Your Excellency to recollect all that has passed during the course of this summer upon this negotiation, and then I should hope you will be able to convince even the French ministers of the strict and scrupulous nicety with which His Majesty has executed all his engagements.

But the King will not suffer himself to be trifled with. It is therefore His Majesty's pleasure that Your Excellency should take the earliest opportunity of explaining very seriously the whole state of the case to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest and shew him how much reason His Majesty will have to be displeas'd at the conduct of

<sup>1</sup> The Palatine Elector having now demanded the payment of 1,200,000 florins in ready money ; the fief of Pleistein and those annexed to Sulzbach and Neuburg with Jülich and Berg, to be all entailed on himself and his heirs male and after them to the House of Zweibrücken, with expectatives on Wildenau and Plosberg, the Court of Vienna demurred as to certain modes of tenure with regard to the Sulzbach-Neuburg duchies and other small points.

the Court of France if the interposition of the Most Christian King should prevent the Elector Palatine from accepting the immense advantages which he will receive by concluding the treaty with the Court of Vienna upon the present terms and what a figure will France make when the whole world comes to see and know that they have broke their word with His Majesty, not from any material interest of their own, but by lowering themselves to act a subaltern part to another prince, and this is a consideration which I am sure ought to take place more than I fear it will do.

I cannot too seriously recommend to Your Excellency's attention the important conversation you will have with the French ministers in consequence of this letter. You will have occasion for all your calmness and all your firmness in the conduct of it, and I hope you will be able to bring Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>e</sup>. Contest to a thorough explanation which he seems more than once to have industriously avoided.<sup>1</sup>

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32842, fo. 48.*)

Whitehall, 4 January 1753.

. . . . . His Majesty was very glad to find that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>e</sup>. Contest had confirmed what the Duc de Mirepoix had been directed to declare concerning His [Most] Christian Majesty's desire of adjusting in an amicable manner the several points in dispute between the two Crowns, but Your Excellency will not wonder at the same time, that His Majesty should now begin to be a little impatient to see some effect from these repeated declarations.

When the King was pleased to refer the consideration of this material point to his servants in England during the time of His Majesty's last residence in his German dominions, I had the honour to acquaint Your Excellency with the result of my Lords Justices' opinion and directed you, according to their resolution, to obtain if possible from the French Court some kind of preliminary proposal from the [Most] Christian King's ministers as a basis for a future negotiation *de Cour en Cour* and there the affair has remained till now. I would not willingly tax the Court of France with dilatoriness upon this occasion, but there certainly has been a delay, whether real or affected, and in the mean time their whole conduct

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Albemarle to Holdernesse, Paris, 31 January, 1753. "I was extremely happy . . . . that His Majesty has been pleased to approve my conduct in omitting the hints contained in that letter which might have been taken as reproaches by this Ministry" (*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 246, fo. 106*).

in the West Indies has been such as does not convince the King of any real and fair intention of bringing these matters to an amicable and just conclusion. The neutral islands still remain unevacuated, and notwithstanding Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest's assertion I will venture to assure Your Lordship that many unjustifiable proceedings are carrying on in many parts of North America, in direct opposition to the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle ; and if one was inclined to put a hard construction upon the whole, it might not be perhaps unnatural to conclude that the French ministry aim at gaining time, concluding nothing, and in the mean while going on in their own way without much regard to their engagements, while on His Majesty's part, the strictest adherence to the faith of treaties leaves them not even the colour of complaint. But Your Excellency may depend upon it that as, on the one hand, the justice of His Majesty's proceedings exempt [*sic*] the King from the reproach of any power whatsoever, so on the other hand, the steadiness and firmness of his councils will not suffer His Majesty to be deluded by ineffectual promises. The King therefore (as the Court of France will not name their terms of accommodation) has been pleased to command his servants to take the whole of the American disputes with the Crown of France into their consideration, and to lay before him their humble advice what proposal it may be advisable to make to the Court of France in the present circumstances in order to end this intricate and, I may say, dangerous affair.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest seems very desirous that the commissaries should still remain assembled at Paris while the negotiation is carrying on between the respective ministers of each Crown. I must confess I am at a loss to guess what he means by this proposal ; for if every point is to be referred to commissaries, and their discussions thereupon to be given as answers to what shall be proposed or objected to on either side, things will remain for ever in the present litigated situation ; and I am very sorry to acquaint Your Excellency that by several things which have dropped from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix in the many conversations I have had with him since his return to England, I have too much reason to think that the French Court will insist upon some points which they must know His Majesty can never consent to, and it is possibly not without foundation that I suspect this as the reason of their desire of keeping the commissaries assembled *pendente lite*. But

tho' the King is willing to make a reciprocal complaisance the basis of the proposed negotiation, the Court of France will be very much deceived if they imagine that that complaisance will be carried to such a degree as to diminish the King's attention to, and resolution to preserve the just rights of his subjects. I shall soon have an opportunity of writing more fully to Your Excellency upon this important subject ; in the mean time it is His Majesty's pleasure that Your Excellency should, in a proper manner, talk to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest agreeable to the tenor of this letter and endeavour to convince him that it is now time to give a proof of his intention of bringing these matters to a speedy and just conclusion, by acting consistently with their professions. . . . .

[For despatches of Holderness to Newcastle on the Silesian Loan Question dated 8 and 15 Feb. 1753, see Satow, *The Silesian Loan*, pp. 318 and 320.]

(*B.M., Add. M.S. 32842, fo. 388.*)

Whitehall, 15 February 1753.

Most secret.

Your Excellency may well remember the suspicions we have entertained here of the King of Prussia's influence over the councils of the Court of Versailles, and I am sorry to acquaint you that His Prussian Majesty's views as to the Palatine negociation and his representation of the way of thinking of the French ministers thereupon are extremely different from the language which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest holds to Your Excellency, and to the tenor of his instructions to the Duke de Mirepoix. His Majesty thought it right that Your Excellency should be put upon your guard, and has therefore permitted me to send you some private intelligence which the King has lately received and which you may depend upon to be genuine.

“ Comme je vous ai déjà informé par mes précédentes de quelle  
 “ façon la France s'est expliquée auprès de l'Angleterre sur l'ajuste-  
 “ ment de la Cour de Manheim avec celle de Vienne, je m'y réfère,  
 “ n'ayant rien à y ajouter, sinon que mylord Albemarle, étant revenu  
 “ à sa charge pour tirer du ministère de France quelque réponse  
 “ un peu plus détaillée sur l'ultimatum autrichien, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Con-  
 “ test luy a fait connoître qu'il ne sçauroit porter aucun jugement  
 “ sur cette pièce, attendu qu'elle étoit conçuë en des termes qu'il

“ n’attendoit point, et qui ont grand besoin d’être commentés. Au  
 “ reste, la France se prête maintenant avec beaucoup plus d’atten-  
 “ tion que par le passé à contrecarrer le projet de l’élection, et,  
 “ outre les représentations énergiques qu’elle a fait faire sur ce  
 “ sujet à l’Electeur Palatin, on vient d’insinuer verbalement à son  
 “ ministre à Paris, que si Son Altesse Electorale se portoit jamais à  
 “ transgresser les engagements contractés avec ses alliés par rap-  
 “ port à l’élection, la France se croiroit aussi entièrement dégagée  
 “ de ceux qu’elle avoit avec ce Prince, et qu’elle regarderoit d’abord  
 “ comme rompu le traité de subside qui subsistoit entre elle et lui.  
 “ L’Electeur de Cologne d’ailleurs appuye avec force les raisons de  
 “ la France, et dans une lettre qu’il a écrite là-dessus en dernier  
 “ lieu à l’Electeur Palatin, il lui a dit entre autres que, quoiqu’il  
 “ ne prétendoit aucunement à s’ingérer dans les affaires de Son  
 “ Altesse Electorale, il ne pouroit pas lui cacher, que si Elle se  
 “ déterminoit à se contenter de l’ultimatum de la Cour de Vienne  
 “ et à souscrire aux conditions qui y étoient proposées, il ne don-  
 “ neroit jamais sa voix à l’élection, et que par conséquent l’Electeur  
 “ se trouveroit également trompé des avantages dont l’ultimatum  
 “ en question le leurroit. Je doute que l’Electeur Palatin, quelque  
 “ envie qu’il pourroit avoir de s’accommoder, ose passer outre et  
 “ s’endurcir contre des représentations aussi énergiques, d’autant  
 “ plus que celle de Vienne, bien loin de l’encourager, continue de  
 “ marquer une extrême indifférence pour le succès de la négociation.  
 “ Ses ministres ne disent plus mot au Baron Beckers ; ils lui lais-  
 “ sent même ignorer si l’Impératrice a consenti ou non à la pro-  
 “ longation que sa cour lui avoit demandée. Si c’est tout de bon  
 “ qu’ils souhaitent de ne pas conclure, il faut avouer qu’ils s’y  
 “ prennent comme il faut pour parvenir à leur but. Mais si c’est  
 “ grimace, ils pourroient bien être les dupes de leur artifice.’

Your Excellency will be watchfull if Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>r</sup>. Contest should  
 ever drop any thing in conversation agreeable to this intelligence,  
 and send me an immediate account of your observations thereupon.

*(Ibid., fo. 417.)*

Whitehall, 15 February 1753.

Apart.

The Duc de Mirepoix has acquainted me that he has lately  
 received fresh instructions from his Court to renew the instances  
 which have been so frequently made touching the list of prizes of



which the commissaries at Paris are to take cognizance. I own I could not contain the surprize which this unexpected event occasioned in me. . . . . To have these instances renewed at this particular period of time when a question in some sort analogous to it is actually discussing in the most serious manner between His Majesty and the King of Prussia, it looks but too much like a concert between the Courts of France and Berlin, tho' I am unwilling to suppose them united upon so unjustifiable a proceeding, and my astonishment was so great that I could not refrain from expressing myself in very strong terms to the Duc de Mirepoix. . . . .

P.S. Your Excellency will be cautious in your conversations with the French ministers upon this subject to distinguish minutely between the pretensions set on foot by the King of Prussia and those of the Court of France. The former attacks the justice of our Courts of Admiralty, and under that pretence stops payment of certain sums due to private persons, which sum sought to have been paid even supposing the King of Prussia at war with England. What the Court of France aim at is to alter the ordinary course of justice and to put into the hands of the commissaries what ought regularly to be tried by the Courts of Admiralty in order to avoid the difficulties which might arise in obtaining satisfaction from the private persons concerned (even after sentence is given in favour of the French) and to load the Crown with the payment of the whole. This will never be submitted to; it is indeed absurd to think of it. Many of the causes contained in the list offered to the French commissaries have already been tried and determined, and were His Majesty to give ear to the proposal of France, it would be establishing a commission for a new Court of appeal, which His Majesty cannot legally grant. The French have never yet complained of want of justice in our Courts of Admiralty; if they begin to do so now, it will be a new question, and it will be as easy to answer their arguments as it has been to refute the frivolous pretences of the King of Prussia.

[For despatches from Holderness to Albemarle on the Silesian Loan Question dated 14 March; 2, 26 April; 3, 24 May; 7, 21 June; 2, 24 August, and from Newcastle to Albemarle dated 5 July, see Satow, *The Silesian Loan*, pp. 326, 332, 369, 370, 376, 382, 384, 385, 395, 401.]



(*B.M., Add. MS. 32846, fo. 128.*)

Whitehall, 24 August 1753.

Separate.

I have His Majesty's express commands to transmitt to Your Excellency copies of a letter from Captain Pye, Commadore on the Barbadoes station and of one from his first lieutenant, by which it too plainly appears that notwithstanding what has passed between you and the French ministers and the solemn promise made to Your Excellency by His Most Christian Majesty himself, the island of Dominico (one of the disputed neutral islands) so far from being evacuated according to the agreement and the repeated orders said to have been sent to the West Indies for the faithfull execution of it, is actually inhabited by four thousand people and has a militia commanded by an officer who avows that he acts under the orders of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Bompar, Governor of Martinico; that there are great quantities of cultivated land and other preparations which evidently denote that several sugar plantations are already established and that a regular government under the superintendency of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Bompar is carried on, divisions made of districts, and other steps taken which shew a plan of settling that island in direct opposition to the agreement entered into between the two Crowns.

The whole of this proceeding is so open, so daring a violation of the most solemn and most recent treaties, so particularly insulting, considering the several applications that have been made to the Court of France reclaiming the execution of that material engagement, that His Majesty has given it me in command to direct Your Excellency to complain in the strongest terms of this infraction of treaties and to insist on the punctual and immediate fulfilling of the promises so often made to you by the French ministers and confirmed to you by His Most Christian Majesty himself. Your Excellency will hear what Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest will now say to colour so unjustifiable a proceeding, and learn in what manner it is proposed that this matter shall be finally concluded, and transmitt an account of what shall pass as soon as possible that the King may judge whether the method chalked out by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St<sup>t</sup>. Contest will be satisfactory; for I must not conceal from you that His Majesty will expect a real security for the future execution of those promises which have been so often made without any effect; but the King will wait to see what shall be offered by

the French ministers and I shall then have His Majesty's orders to acquaint Your Excellency with his further pleasure.

[For a despatch from Holderness to Albemarle on the Silesian Loan Question, dated 6 September 1753, see Satow, *The Silesian Loan*, p. 404.]

(*B.M., Add. MS.* 32846, *fo.* 321.)

Whitehall, 27 Sept. 1753.

I have received and laid before the King Your Excellency's letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> inst. inclosing a copy of one wrote by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rouillé to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest upon the subject of the evacuation of the island of Dominica. The French ministers contradict in so positive and peremptory a manner the accounts sent by Commodore Pye that there remains nothing but to verify the fact one way or other, and His Majesty will give the necessary directions to that end; in the meantime the King will suspend his judgement. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Bompar's conduct has appeared so very shuffling with Governor Grenville that it is not impossible but he may likewise have attempted to deceive his own Court. . . .

(*Ibid.*, *fo.* 383.)

Whitehall, 18 October 1753.

. . . . The French have endeavoured in all corners of the world to raise a jealousy against His Majesty on account of the marriage treaty concluded with the Duke of Modena. Probably the steps you have observed to have been taken of late with the minister of an Italian state <sup>1</sup> has (*sic*) the same object in view, tho' perhaps they will be attended with as little success as their efforts have already met with at Madrid and Turin.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. Duras is every day renewing his attack upon the Spanish ministers for bringing about a new defensive treaty between the several branches of the House of Bourbon, and has even been so importunate as to have given some degree of disgust to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Carvajal, who has all along declared that he sees no reason for any apprehension of danger and that he knows of no enemies that France has at present, as all the powers of Europe are in profound peace and avow themselves desirous of maintaining the present tranquillity. If the Spanish Ambassador at Paris has received

<sup>1</sup> Monzone, Minister of the Duke of Modena.

any directions as to his conduct in case the French ministers should hold the same language to him that their ambassador does at Madrid, I dare say he would make no scruple of acquainting Your Excellency with the substance of them, and you may let Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Masones know that, tho' the report of a new defensive alliance between France and Spain, in which the King of Prussia is to be included, is industriously spread every where, and even gains credit in some places, His Majesty has that reliance on the wisdom of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Carvajal that he will not suffer himself to imagine the insinuations of France will make any great impression at the Court of Madrid.

[For a despatch from Holderness to Albemarle on the Silesian Loan Question, dated 29 November 1753, see Satow, *The Silesian Loan*, p. 407.]

(*B.M., Add.* 32848, fo. 114.)

Whitehall, 24 January 1754.

I have His Majesty's commands to send Your Lordship a short historical account of the negotiation carried on here for accommodating the differences which have arisen between the East India Companies of England and France upon the coast of Coromandel.

. . . . .  
I must begin with a very short account of the origin of these dissensions. The Province of *Arcatte*, in which most of His Majesty's principal settlements as well as those of the French are situated, being part of the Great Mogul's dominions, is governed by a Nabob who is inferior to but not under the command of the Suba or Vice-Roy of Decan, whose residence is at Golconda. You will not imagine that there is any great order or regularity in the constitutions of those barbarous countries. Two competitors arose for the nabobship of Arcatte, one called Chunda Saib who was supported by the French, the other Mahomet Ally Cawn in alliance with the English company. The different princes of India took different parts in these quarrels, and Nazir Zing the late Viceroy of Decan came with a very formidable army at the invitation of the French to the assistance of Chunda Saib. Nazir Zing was murdered soon after he came into the province of Arcatte, some say in consequence of the intrigues of the French; at least it is certain that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Dupleix enriched himself immensely by the

plunder of Nazir Zing's camp, and his army having lost their chief were soon afterwards dispersed, and Chunda Saib taken prisoner by Mahomet Ally's forces, lost at once his pretensions to empire and his head; which event however has not put an end to the dispute between the two companies. Various have been the successes of this war since that period, carried on at a very heavy expence to both companies, and which might in the end have enabled the Moors to have drove both the English and French from their settlements, were they by practice to learn the European art of war, which has hitherto given a handful of English or French troops a decided superiority over very numerous and formidable armies of Moors.

I suppose it was from considerations of this nature that the French were induced to send commissaries over here early last spring to treat of an accommodation with the English company who had appointed a secret committee to treat with Mo<sup>r</sup>. Duvelaer and his brother. The first proposal that was made from France was that of a perpetual neutrality between the two companies, even at a time when the respective Crowns might chance to be at war. The secret committee having acquainted the King's servants here with what was offered by the French commissaries, His Majesty was advised not to give ear to a proposal which appeared insidious and which could not be (or at least would not have been) faithfully executed. This proposal being thus rejected, the English Company desired that, without looking so far forward into what might happen hereafter, the present differences should be accommodated, and expressed their willingness to come into reasonable terms of agreement for that purpose. They therefore offered that all acquisitions or conquests on either side, should be given up, and things put upon the foot they were or ought to have been at the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, which appeared to them the most effectual method of healing the present grievances and preventing the like for the future. But this offer was rejected on the part of France. Since that time several memorials were drawn up, and several conferences held to form the heads of a treaty which should determine and settle what each company was to remain in possession of, and by these means the negotiation spun on till towards the beginning of September, when the Duc de Mirepoix communicated to the Duke of Newcastle and myself a letter he had received from the Garde des Sceaux

expressing that minister's earnest desire of reconciling the two companies and proving by the most cogent and forcible reasons that it was for the mutual advantage of both companies to put an end to the state of hostility in which they really lived at this time, and directing the Duc de Mirepoix to endeavour to induce the King's servants to enter into negotiation with him upon a point which, if suffered to continue in its present situation, might sooner or later endanger the peace subsisting between the two Crowns.

In this state of the negotiation I received the King's commands to enter more particularly into this point with the Duc de Mirepoix and the French commissaries, calling for information from the gentlemen of the secret committee before mentioned; and I must premise before I enter farther into what passed between us that, so long ago as the 27th June last, the Duke of Newcastle, whose exactness and punctuality in business are not unknown to Your Excellency, had taken down in writing from the Duke de Mirepoix's own mouth an assurance that, while the negotiation was depending, no forces of any kind should be sent to India; that we might depend upon ample satisfaction in regard to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Dupleix to whose private ambitions these dissensions in India are chiefly ascribed; and that his Court was thoroughly in earnest to reconcile the two companies. . . . .

My first step with the Duc de Mirepoix was to establish as the basis of this negotiation that the two companies should for the future remain *des compagnies commerçantes* and be no longer *compagnies belligérantes ou conquérantes*; and that we should avoid on either side entering into the point of right which perhaps each would be able to maintain by grants obtained in different circumstances and at different times; which would be an endless discussion and prevent what we both of us meant, vizt. preventing the two companies from continuing in an actual state of hostility as auxiliaries, tho' at peace as principals. We agreed that every article which might be liable to discussion should be tried by this touchstone and reduced to that parallel. For this reason I avoid troubling your Lordship with the legal pretensions of Mahomet Ally Cawn acting under the regular and legal authority of the Great Mogul, or giving you the trouble of shewing you that those who do now or may hereafter oppose him, are usurpers. It is likewise for this reason that I induced the English company not



to insist (as perhaps they have a right to do) on the exclusive possession of Massulapatan and the island or point of Divi or Diu, which is now given by the Garde des Sceaux as a reason, or at least an excuse, for the delay which has happened upon the project of a treaty sent over from hence.

But to resume the narrative ; I must acquaint Your Excellency that after frequent conferences with the Duc de Mirepoix and the French commissaries, I agreed to reduce into writing the whole of the English Company's pretensions, and that to save time I would put it into the regular form of a treaty as the season of the year was too far advanced to admit of much delay ; and at the same time I advised the English Company to be as moderate as possible in their demands and acquainted Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix that he must look upon what I should deliver to him as the *ultimatum* on our part. When the project of a treaty was prepared, I had a conference in my own house at which were present the Duc de Mirepoix, the secret committee of the English Company and the French commissaries. The articles were each of them separately examined and so far agreed to that both the ambassador and the commissaries promised they would advise their Court to accept them, and promised I should have a categorical answer one way or other without loss of time ; and I send Your Excellency inclosed a copy of the project of agreement between the two companies and of the convention by which it was proposed the two Crowns should approve and confirm it.

The rest of the transaction Your Excellency knows, excepting that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix has given from time to time, when these delays have been enquired into and complained of, the strongest assurances of the sincerity of his Court for adjusting the point in dispute, and made the strongest asseverations that no force whatsoever more than the usual and ordinary recruits have been sent into India. But the East India Company growing greatly uneasy at these unexpected and unaccountable delays, I wrote to Your Lordship for the first time upon this subject by the Duc de Mirepoix's courier.

The directions I am to give Your Excellency by His Majesty's express command, will be contained in a very short compass. They are that you should acquaint the Garde des Sceaux with His Majesty's surprize that, while the negotiation is still depending between the two East India Companies, any ships should be sent



by France into those parts with a military force ; that His Majesty however still wishes that the dissensions between the English and French Company might be adjusted upon the fair and equitable terms proposed from hence ; if such cannot be obtained, the King will give that support to his subjects they are justly entitled to.

(*B.M., Add. 32848, fo. 218.*)

Whitehall, 7 Feb. 1754.

Most secret.

I have the King's permission in the utmost confidence to give Your Excellency notice of an information His Majesty has lately received, that the French ministers have not long ago represented to the King of Prussia the necessity of making some new offers to His Majesty touching the disputes which have arisen concerning the Silesia loan, and have offered again to be the mediators and proposers of some new plan of adjustment. This hint will be sufficient to put Your Excellency upon the watch, whenever you shall find any of the French ministers aiming at an opening of this kind. . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 249.*)

Whitehall, 21 March 1754.

. . . . . His Majesty is persuaded Your Excellency will use the utmost diligence to obtain constant and exact information of what is transacting in the several ports of France. There is the greatest reason to think that some considerable preparations are making, and it appears by very fresh advices from Dunkirk that a very considerable number of seamen are ordered from thence to the Port of Brest, tho' it is not known what may be the object of their destination. The uneasiness which some of the French ministers have shewn at the departure of His Majesty's squadron for the East Indies gives room to suspect that they may soon be followed by some French ships of war. The King will be expecting with some impatience the accounts you give me room to hope for after the return of those persons whom you have employed to make secret enquiries at l'Orient. . . . .

(B.M., *Add. MS.* 32850, fo. 92.)

SIR THOMAS ROBINSON, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO ALBEMARLE.

Whitehall, 15 August 1754.

. . . . . Whilst I am congratulating Your Excellency upon this happy issue, according to all appearances, of an affair<sup>1</sup> which might have involved two great nations, who thought themselves in peace and confidence, in actual war without their knowing it, it is with concern that I find myself obliged to proceed by relating to Your Excellency the part which the French Court is strongly suspected to have had in Mo<sup>r</sup>. Ensenada's designs. The open indiscretion of the French ministry in discovering their hopes of raising so many vexations in Spain against the English as might provoke the latter, from their vivacity, to fall upon Spain, the whole tenor of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Duras's conduct, his continual discourses, particularly for near a twelve month past, upon the impossibility of the continuance of the peace between England and Spain, his conversations with the Spanish ministers concerning our establishment upon Rio Tinto, and his hints of service to the Spaniards to reduce us to reason, the like discourses of French ministers at different Courts, particularly Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Ossun's affected apprehensions to Sir James Gray, as if certain new acquisitions and establishments of the English in America might bring on new troubles; in addition to all this, the frequent mention of the Mosquito Shore and Rio Tinto which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de St. Contest made but a few days before his death to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Masones, all which circumstances will appear less surprizing to Your Excellency when combined with the actual hostilities now committing by the French in other parts of America, for surely it is impossible that these hostile attacks made by France and Spain should have happened at the same time without a secret understanding between Ensenada and France, from which M<sup>r</sup>. Keene very justly concludes that the disgrace of the Spanish minister, now so notoriously convicted of being engaged in the French interest, will probably make the Court of Versailles less enterprizing in America.

Altho' this providential discovery of the secret hostile orders

<sup>1</sup> The disgrace of Ensenada for sending, behind the back of the King of Spain, instructions to the Viceroy in America for hostile action against the British (see Sir R. Lodge, *Private Correspondence of Sir Benjamin Keene*, p. 38).

sent by Mo<sup>r</sup>. Ensenada to America, has been the principal and most efficient cause of his disgrace, yet I am to observe farther to Your Excellency, that his supposed intrigues at the Court of Naples, and the share he has undoubtedly had in fomenting the rebellion of the Jesuits at Paraguay, who refuse to submit to the late treaty between the Courts of Spain and Portugal, have greatly contributed thereto, as confirmation of his duplicity and treachery to his master. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, fo. 301.)

Whitehall, 12 Sept. 1754.

. . . . . His Majesty was pleased to express his great regard for the personal character and good intentions of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rouillé, and to approve the manner in which Your Excellency cultivates now and has so long cultivated the friendship of that minister ; but however earnest he may be to have that reciprocal confidence renewed, which, as he had been told, subsisted in the time of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Puyzieulx, yet it appears to arise more from his own private inclinations, than from any general desire of the whole French Court, whose conduct in America is evidently the effect of a settled premeditated plan to distress the English trade in those parts, and to commit the most glaring encroachments and usurpations upon His Majesty's just rights and possessions. When that conduct alters, it may be thought properer to embrace any fair offers of reciprocal confidence, and nothing can be a greater proof of a sincere alteration of their conduct than for them to begin :—

1<sup>o</sup>. By executing the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and fulfilling the subsequent promises which His Most Christian Majesty himself gave Your Excellency as to the entire evacuation of the neutral islands ;

2<sup>do</sup>. By relinquishing the forts which they have so unjustly built and the possession they have taken of so many posts in Acadie, or Nova Scotia, notwithstanding the positive agreement between the two Courts that no innovation should be made there during the negotiation of the commissaries ; and

3<sup>tio</sup>. By withdrawing their forces from the Ohio and the countries adjacent thereto, so that everything may be previously put in those parts upon the footing it was at the signing of the said treaty of Aix la Chapelle.

These earnest, once given by the French will, as Your Excellency

may be assured, lead directly to the point which seems so much desired by Mo<sup>r</sup>. Rouillé; but the not performing express stipulations and solemn promises, as in the case of the neutral islands, the encroaching farther and farther during the sanction of an established commission for adjusting the respective claims and rights, as in the affair of Nova Scotia, and the pushing of claims by force of arms where no claims were ever heard of before, as in the present state of things upon the Ohio, are, my Lord, points of such consequence as seem to require a previous satisfaction before that intimacy which is so much desired, can be well entered into with any consistency.

As the conduct of the French in North America makes it absolutely necessary for His Majesty to take such measures there as he shall think proper for the protection of the trade of his subjects and for the defence of the possessions belonging to his Crown in opposition to the open hostilities committed against them, His Majesty does not think proper to send Your Excellency any orders upon this subject; but you may, as from yourself, take an opportunity to talk agreeably to this letter to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Rouillé, either in answer to what he has already said to Your Excellency upon that subject, or whenever he shall renew that discourse. For I can assure Your Excellency in confidence that His Majesty will not suffer himself to be amused by negotiation, or by referring pretensions which have no foundation to commissaries, while the French are in possession of countries belonging to the Crown of Great Britain and are acting hostilely in the manner which they are now doing in North America. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32851, fo. 14.*)

Whitehall, 3 October 1754.

. . . . . I am now to acquaint you, for your own information only, that the King having taken the affairs of North America into farther consideration, has been pleased to order two regiments of foot, commanded by Sir Peter Halket and Colonel Dunbar, to be sent forthwith from Cork to Virginia, and to appoint Major General Braddock to command in chief all His Majesty's forces in those parts. Your Excellency is so well acquainted with the conduct of the French there, whether arising from the enterprising genius of their governors, or in consequence of immediate orders from Europe, that it will be no surprise to them to hear (as they

in all probability will) that His Majesty, who is always ready to grant what is necessary for the protection of his subjects, has been pleased to send at their request this succour for the present. But Your Excellency will be very attentive in observing what effect this measure, which the French have made unavoidable for the defence of His Majesty's just rights and possessions, may have upon the minds of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rouillé and the other ministers.

His Majesty observed in one of Your Excellency's late letters that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rouillé had talked to Your Excellency in a manner as if the neutral islands had been evacuated long ago. The fact is that those islands still swarm with French inhabitants, and the governor of Martinico suffers his people to cut wood there as openly as ever, notwithstanding the convention made between the governors of Barbadoes and Martinico, and the proclamations that have been issued by them respectively for putting a stop to such proceedings on both sides. Governor Grenville has faithfully executed his part of that convention and has punished with the utmost severity those under his government who have been convicted of infringing that agreement and of departing from the neutrality to be observed between the two Crowns. This unequal state of things must necessarily produce such inconveniences as cannot longer be endured, nor can His Majesty's subjects be considered as bound by the said convention unless the French enforce the immediate and punctual execution of it on their part.

I have likewise His Majesty's commands to prepare Your Excellency for the instructions which will be very shortly sent to you and to the Dutch Ambassador at Paris with respect to the works which are carrying on at Dunkirk. His Majesty only waits for the concert to be formed at The Hague as to the manner in which the joint complaint of the two powers is to be made upon this important occasion.

*(Ibid., fo. 129.)*

Whitehall, 4 November 1754.

. . . . His Majesty was pleased to express his satisfaction at the zeal with which Your Excellency continued to execute his Royal Orders and particularly in refuting all that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rouillé can alledge in pretending to accuse His Majesty's subjects of being the first aggressors in America.

The annual supply of 1200 idle and loose people which has been



sent to America every year under the command of a proportionable number of officers, makes a body of 6000 men at least since the Treaty of Aix, which single consideration justifies (were there any occasion for such a justification) the sending and raising the forces which the King has ordered for the American service. But what Your Excellency adds as to the probability that the French will augment their numbers upon the news of the embarkation to be made from Ireland for Virginia is but too well confirmed by the advices His Majesty has received of their raising a body of 2500 men in Alsatia and in and about the country of Liege. Those which are raising in Alsatia may possibly come under the description of convicts and felons, but they must be of a better sort which are picking up in the country of Liege and the adjacent parts, and which are to be embarked at one port or other of France in February or March next.

Your Excellency will observe to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rouillé, as he has made frequent mention of a fleet which he supposes to be designed for America from hence, that there are no orders given for more than two ships of the line and two frigates, in addition to the ships usually stationed in those parts; altho', with respect to both the East and West Indies, His Majesty has not only the present confirmation of the practice of the French in embarking imperceptibly, at different ports, these constant supplies of men to the latter, but has likewise advice, that there is on foot a dangerous scheme of fitting out six of the French King's ships with 2000 men on board for the former, about March next, in order to strike a desperate blow up the River Ganges. This last circumstance is mentioned to Your Excellency at present in confidence only and not for any other use than barely to direct Your Excellency by His Majesty's order, to be extremely watchfull with regard to what may be preparing in the several ports of France. . . . .

(*B.M., Add. MS. 32851, fo. 221.*)

HOLDERNESSE TO ALBEMARLE.

Whitehall, 28 November 1754.

As the several steps which have been taken in the negotiation carrying on between the India Companies of England and France, since I had the honor of writing to Your Excellency last upon that subject on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April have been unconclusive, I have avoided troubling you with an unnecessary detail untill I was

able to bring this transaction to some fixed period. The inclosures of this letter, together with some short explanation of them, will sufficiently inform Your Excellency of the slow progress which has hitherto been made in this business, notwithstanding it is so much for the interest of both parties concerned to bring it to an amicable conclusion. But Your Excellency will not wonder that those charged with this negotiation on the part of the English Company should be diffident of the sincerity of the French when you reflect that the points in dispute have at three different times been adjusted finally in all appearance with the French Ambassador and French commissaries here, and that they have been as often disavowed by those who employed them and have always been directed to advance new pretensions in proportion as the English company came nearer to what was thought the French themselves understood to be a reasonable and equitable method of putting an end to the troubles in India.

The first of these inclosures, no. 1, contains a memorial of observations and a new plan of a treaty in consequence of what was proposed by the English committee, copies of which were transmitted to Your Excellency in April. The conditions offered by the French appeared inadmissible to the English Company and the reasonings by which they are supported, being rather offensive than convincing, a formal answer was delayed to avoid a useless and warm altercation.

Much time was spent in endeavouring to adjust this matter with the French Ambassador, before his return to Paris, but as nothing could then be concluded, I transmitted to His Excellency in a letter I wrote him on the 6th of August a copy of one (nos. 2 and 3) I had received from the secret committee proposing certain explanatory questions which seemed necessary to elucidate the material point in debate concerning the new settlements the French Company intended to erect in the province of Decan. The following inclosure, no. 4, will shew Your Excellency that, instead of answering the questions that were put to him, the Duc de Mirepoix was instructed to insist on a reply to the French observations of the 4th of May; though indeed of himself he takes some cursory notice of the 4th and 5th articles of the treaty which make the remaining objects of difficulty between the two companies; and this letter from the French Ambassador to me has brought on a reply from the English committee, no. 5, a new plan of the 5th Art. no. 6, a letter

from me to the Duc de Mirepoix, no. 7, and a new project of a 4th article no. 8.

But though I have His Majesty's permission to send these documents for Your Excellency's information, I have nothing in command from His Majesty upon the subject of them. They will sufficiently make you master of the question, and if the French ministers should enter into conversation with you upon this subject, you will be pleased to let me know the result of it.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 250.*)

ROBINSON TO RUVIGNY DE COSNE, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES.

Whitehall, 22 July 1755.

The Lords Justices having been informed that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix, the French Ambassador, has left England this morning by order of his Court without taking leave, I am to acquaint you that it is their direction that you should quit France immediately without taking leave in order to repair to England, and that you should endeavour to give notice to as many of His Majesty's subjects now resident in France as you conveniently can of the orders herewith sent you in consequence of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mirepoix's departure from hence.

## HANS STANLEY

1761

STANLEY was a Member of Parliament and Lord of the Admiralty, who was sent by Pitt with credentials and instructions to negotiate a peace with France in May, 1761, subsequent to Pitt's private correspondence with Choiseul earlier in the year (*S.P.* 78, no. 251). As is well known, the negociation failed, not so much from any fault of Stanley's, as from the chicanery of Choiseul on the one side and the more than unfortunate methods of negotiation adopted by Pitt on the other.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 251.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . HANS STANLEY . . . . . APPOINTED  
MINISTER TO . . . . . THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James's, 18 May 1761.

Whereas in consequence of certain overtures relative to peace made to Us by Our good brother the Most Christian King, the Sieur de Bussy is to repair to Our Court in quality of Minister from the said Most Christian King, and We on Our part have appointed you to repair to the Court of France with the same character, and having already directed the several letters and memorials that have passed between the two Courts relative to these matters to be put into your hands, We have thought fit to give you the following instructions for your conduct in the execution of the important trust thereby reposed in You.

1. You are upon the receipt of these instructions together with Our full power, and credential letter to the Most Christian King to repair to Dover, so as not to fail on any account of being at the said place in the course of the 23rd day of this instant May, agreeably to what is contained in the letters of the 11th instant in answer to

those of the Duc de Choiseul of the 4th of the same month, concerning the time of departure of the respective ministers. On your arrival at Dover you are to embark on board the vessel which We have directed to be ready there to receive you, and you are to sail for Calais as soon as the circumstances of the wind and of the navigation shall permit.

2. On your arrival at Calais, you are to inform yourself certainly whether the Sieur de Bussy shall have actually sailed from thence for Great Britain, or whether he shall still be in that place or not yet arrived there ; and in case the said Sieur de Bussy shall still be at Calais or not yet arrived there, you are to remain at that place till he shall be actually embarked on board the vessel which shall have been prepared for him by order of the Most Christian King, and shall have sailed for this Our Kingdom, when, and not before, you are to proceed with all convenient speed to Paris.

[For the seven remaining clauses of these instructions, see F. Thackeray, *Life of Chatham*, 1827, Vol. I, pp. 506-8, where also are printed copious extracts from Pitt's despatches to him.]



JOHN RUSSELL, 4th DUKE OF BEDFORD  
1762-1763

IT was fitting that Pitt's most formidable opponent on the question of peace or war in 1761 should be made ambassador for the negotiation of peace in 1762. He had been made Lord Privy Seal in November 1761 after Pitt's fall, and on 1 September 1762 he was given full powers to negotiate with France and Spain. On the ratification of the preliminaries he was appointed ambassador extraordinary to the Court of France. He remained in France until the signature of the definitive treaty on 10 February, returning a few weeks later to resume those political activities which earned him the title of leader of the "Bloomsbury gang" from the faction of Temple, Pitt, Wilkes and "Junius." There is a full account of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and his despatches from Paris were edited by Lord John Russell (*Bedford Correspondence*, Vol. III, pp. 101-234).

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 253.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . JOHN, DUKE OF BEDFORD . . . .  
APPOINTED MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO . . . . THE MOST  
CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James's, 4 September 1762.

Whereas certain propositions for preliminary articles of peace between Us and Our good brother the Most Christian King have been treated of by letters which have passed between the Secretaries of State of the two Courts, copies of which We have directed to be put into your hands herewith, in consequence of which correspondence it has been mutually agreed to send persons of rank as ministers plenipotentiaries to each Court respectively, We, reposing the highest trust in your prudence, experience and abilities, have

thought proper to appoint you to be Our minister plenipotentiary to Our said good brother the Most Christian King and to give you the following instructions for your guidance in this most important commission.

1<sup>st</sup>. You are upon the receipt of these Our instructions and your letters of credence, together with Our full power and all other papers relative to this negotiation to repair to Dover, where you are to embark on board one of Our yachts which We have ordered to receive you, for Calais, from whence you are to proceed with all convenient speed to Versailles. . . . .

2<sup>nd</sup>. You shall in like manner deliver Our letter of credence to the Most Christian Queen. . . . .

3<sup>rd</sup>. You are likewise to make suitable compliments in Our name to the Dauphin and Dauphiness. . . . .

4<sup>th</sup>. Among the papers relative to this negotiation which We have ordered to be put into your hands, you will find one entitled *Projet d'articles préliminaires arrêtés entre la France et l'Angleterre* dated *Versailles, le 21 juillet 1762* and signed *Choiseul*, which paper was transmitted in a letter of the same date from the Count de Choiseul to one of Our principal Secretaries of State, and whereas, upon mature deliberation the said *projet* appears to have been drawn up nearly conformably to the reasonable propositions of peace which we had caused to be offered to the Court of France in a memorial dated the 10th of July last, copy of which you will also find among the papers above mentioned, Our Will and Pleasure is that the said *projet* do serve as the basis of the negotiation with which you are charged, and provided the Court of France shall agree to the several alterations and explanations contained in these instructions and that the preliminary articles with the Court of Spain shall be so far adjusted as to be ready for signature at the same time, and that you shall have full assurance of the Court of Portugal being included therein, you are in virtue of Our full power to proceed to the signing of preliminary articles of peace between Us and the Most Christian King.

We do agree to the first, second and third articles of the *projet* of France, provided the words (*l'Accadie incluse*) be inserted after the word *Canada* in the beginning of the second article.

We do also agree to the fourth article, provided the Most Christian King do admit of a reasonable inspection on Our part in order to ascertain the due observance of those conditions which are by the

consent of France annexed to the cession of the islands of St. Pierre and Michelon.

We do likewise agree to the fifth article of the *projet* on condition that, previous to the signature of the definitive treaty, the engineers whom We shall send to Dunkirk, do make their report of the Cunette which is to determine whether that work shall subsist in it's present state or not.

The clear sense of the sixth article may be most easily ascertained by proper explanatory references to the map proposed to be annexed to the preliminaries which will fix the limits between the two Crowns in North America beyond dispute. Our Will and Pleasure therefore is that you be most particularly careful to see that the coloured line which is to mark the boundary between the two nations be drawn from the source of the Mississippi to the sea, dividing that river longitudinally in equal parts from its source to the River Iberville, from the branching of which last from the Mississippi, the said line of limits is to be continued, dividing in the same manner the River Iberville and the Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea ; and the navigation as far as the said coloured line extends is to be common to both nations ; but, should that part of the navigation which extends from the separation of the Mississippi and the Iberville through the above lakes to the sea prove either impracticable or insufficient to answer the ends of commerce by being navigable only at certain times, or for vessels of too small size for the purposes of trade, in that case, Our subjects are to have a right to use the same navigation from the separation of the Mississippi from the Iberville to the sea, which the subjects of France generally practice. And whereas the great object We propose by the limits above described, besides the acquisition of an extended territory, is the establishing a certain, fixed boundary between Our dominions in North America and those of the Most Christian King, which may ascertain beyond all possibility of doubt the respective property of the two Crowns in that part of the world, and which may by that means remove forever the source of those unhappy disputes which always arise from an equivocal and unsettled frontier, and from which the miseries and calamities of the present war have sprung, Our Will and Pleasure is that you do exert your utmost attention with regard to this article which is to be treated in such clear and explicit terms as shall render it incapable of any misconstruction and as shall for the future remove

even a pretence on the part of France to claim either as part of Louisiana or under any other denomination whatsoever, anything in North America to the East or on the left of the Mississippi from the source of the said river till the branching of the River Iberville out of the Mississippi, nor from thence to the north or left of the River Iberville thro' the Lakes of Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea by which line of demarcation New Orleans and the island on which it is situated in the annexed map will remain to France.

We agree to the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth articles of the French *projet*, as also to the eleventh, only with the addition of the Count de la Lippe Buckbourg, and you are to take particular care, wherever any restitutions are to be made on either side, that the stipulations with regard to the condition in which such countries or fortresses are to be delivered up, be in every respect reciprocal and expressed, as near as can be, in the same words, so that the countries and fortresses to be restored on the part of France to Us and to Our allies be delivered up in the same condition with those which may be to be restored to that Crown.

As to the twelfth article, it having been understood on both sides that we should not treat of the interests of Our respective allies without their participation, in conformity with that rule We propose to enter into no discussion in these preliminaries which can in any shape affect the right of Our good brother and ally the King of Prussia, to Wezel and Gueldres. It is therefore Our intention to include the evacuation of those towns and territories by the Most Christian King in the agreement to withdraw Our troops on both sides into the dominions of their respective Sovereigns, and to stipulate that no succours either in men or money shall be given by either of the contracting powers to such of their respective allies as shall continue engaged in the present war in Germany.

As to the thirteenth article of the French *projet* which mentions the captures made at sea after the commencement of hostilities but before the formal declaration of war, you are to adhere to what We have constantly and uniformly declared to the Court of France, particularly in the memorial of the 10th of July last, that those captures can never be admitted by Us to make an article in any treaty, and you will accordingly take care that no mention be made thereof in the preliminaries or the definitive treaty.

We agree to the fourteenth article of the *projet* abovementioned. With regard to the fifteenth article, it being proposed on the

part of France to refer a more particular consideration of the respective interests of the two Crowns in the East Indies to the definitive treaty, it will be sufficient in the preliminaries to consent to the restitution of the different comptoirs which the French possessed before the war on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel in their present state, retaining those which We have conquered from them in Bengal, promising at the same time to fix upon some arrangement in the definitive treaty, whereby the French shall be enabled to carry on their trade in the Ganges, the Court of France on their part giving Us satisfactory assurances of the restitution of whatever they shall have taken from Our subjects in the East Indies during the present war.

We agree to the proposal made in the sixteenth article, that the prisoners shall be restored on each side without ransom, but upon the express condition which is also proposed in this article that France is to reimburse the whole expence of maintaining their prisoners in Our dominions, and We shall on the other hand pay the expence which France may have been at to maintain the British prisoners there, and proper care is to be taken to have this account exactly stated and liquidated.

We agree to the seventeenth article of the *projet*, understanding that all treaties subsisting before the War are thereby to be renewed.

As to the eighteenth article, it being Our great and important object in the present negotiation to obtain a lasting as well as an equitable peace, Our Will and Pleasure is that you do with the utmost zeal and attention guard most cautiously against any insidious overture which, under pacifick appearances, may only cover a design of changing the mode and shifting the scene of the war. And as no peace either with France or Spain is admissible consistently with Our honour and the interests of Our Kingdoms which has not an eye to the security of Portugal, it is highly necessary that we should be perfectly satisfied on this head, and therefore, should Spain refuse to come to an accommodation upon reasonable terms, Our Will and Pleasure is that you do make it a condition *sine quâ non* of Our separate peace with France, that that Crown do not take part with Spain in the present war either as principal or auxiliary against Us or Portugal, and as you are to take particular care that we have perfect satisfaction with regard to this matter, it is impossible to fix the epochs either for restitutions, evacuations, or release of prisoners till We are sufficiently



assured that France will not make use of the strength which We should by the abovementioned restitutions, evacuations, and release of prisoners put into her hands either against Us or against Our good brother and ally the Most Faithful King. But in case you shall receive from the French ministers such satisfaction as you shall judge sufficient with regard to the conduct of their Court in the war between Us and the Catholick King, as also in that between the Crowns of Portugal and Spain, in case this last shall not agree to put an end to all hostilities in those parts, you are then to proceed to negotiate the fixation of epochs for the cessation of hostilities on the signing of the preliminaries, and for the mutual restitution of conquests and the release of prisoners on the signature of the definitive treaty, and you will assure the French ministers that Our sincere and earnest desire to see the peace between the two Crowns carried into effectual execution will induce Us to consent to such epochs as shall be consistent with the distance of the several places and with the uncertainty of the conveyance of all orders to be despatched by sea, which will be liable not to arrive in due time if a too short space shall be fixed for their execution. On this principle therefore, and not with a view to obtain any unnecessary procrastination, We cannot but think the epochs mentioned in the French *projet* for the restitution of conquests are such as would render it perhaps impracticable, at least greatly uncertain whether the orders, however immediately given, could arrive at the several places of their destination so as to be carried into execution within the time limited. Our Will and Pleasure therefore is that in negotiating this matter you do agree to such epochs as shall appear to be amply sufficient, considering the distances of the respective places to be restored, and you may assure the French ministers that We shall on Our part make no delay in despatching orders for the immediate execution of what shall be stipulated on that behalf. And whereas several of Our subjects from different parts of Our dominions may have settled in those places occupied by Our arms during the present war, which will by the definitive treaty be restored to France, Our Will and Pleasure is that you do take particular care to insert an article, or clause in some article, stipulating in clear and explicit terms that all Our subjects who shall have repaired to any of the places to be restored as above, have proper and sufficient time allowed them to withdraw from thence and to dispose of and carry away all their effects, and also to

recover all debts that shall be justly due to them from the inhabitants who shall remain subjects to France. And in treating of the cessation of hostilities you are to take care that the periods fixed for the sea shall be twelve days in the Channel and North Seas, six weeks beyond the Channel, the British Seas and the North Sea, as far as Cape St. Vincent; six weeks *more* beyond the said Cape to the equinoctial line whether in the Ocean or the Mediterranean, but in case this farther term of six weeks *more* shall be objected to, as too long a period for hostilities to continue at so near a distance as Cape St. Vincent, you are at liberty to shorten that term from Cape St. Vincent to the Equator or to extend the limits from the Chanel as far as the Canary Islands, from which islands the farther term of six weeks to the Equator must be insisted on, and six months beyond the said equinoctial line or Equator and in all other places of the world without any exception or other more particular distinction of time or place; and you will be attentive that these periods be expressed so clearly and explicitly as to leave no room for any doubts which have arisen on former occasions and by which the cessation of hostilities has been deemed to take place in the space of six weeks in all parts on this side the equinoctial line.

We agree to the nineteenth and last article, concluding that the fort of St. Johns or any other places that may have been taken in Newfoundland be comprized therein.

5<sup>th</sup>. It having been agreed that the ministers plenipotentiaries sent to the respective Courts should, as soon as the preliminary articles shall be signed and ratified, take upon them the character of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, you will receive at the same time with Our ratification of the preliminaries, Our credential letters to the Most Christian King and Queen investing you with that character, which letters you will present with the usual ceremonies in audiences which you are to demand for that purpose.

6<sup>th</sup>. Whereas Our Royal Predecessor . . . . .

7<sup>th</sup>. You shall represent to the Most Christian King . . . . .

8<sup>th</sup>. You shall insist in Our name . . . . .

9<sup>th</sup>. You shall carefully observe the motions . . . . .

10<sup>th</sup>. You are during your residence in France to use your best endeavours to procure as exact an account as may be of the countries under the dominion of the Most Christian King, together

with the most accurate account that you can obtain of the fortifications and state of defence of the same, as also of the number and present condition of the French forces by sea and land and of the means the Most Christian King may have for augmenting the same on occasion. You are likewise to endeavour to inform yourself as accurately as possible what are the ordinary expences of government and what is the amount and state of the revenue, from whence it arises, and what resources the Crown of France may have for levying any and what extraordinary supplies. You are further to procure an account of the state and nature of the commerce carried on in the different parts of the Most Christian King's dominions, and also of their several manufactures and particularly of the state of population throughout the said countries. On these heads you are from time to time as proper opportunity shall offer, to transmit for Our information the fullest and clearest accounts you shall be able to procure by separate letters confined to these matters only, to one of Our principal Secretaries of State, and you may be assured that your particular diligence and attention to the punctual execution of these orders will not fail to recommend you to Our Royal favour.

11<sup>th</sup>. You shall carefully maintain . . . . .

12<sup>th</sup>. You shall, after the preliminaries shall be signed, protect and countenance Our merchants . . . . .

13<sup>th</sup>. You shall constantly correspond . . . . .

14<sup>th</sup>. You will in general be extremely attentive . . . . .<sup>1</sup>

15<sup>th</sup>. Of all matters you shall be informed of . . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 253.*)

SEPARATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . JOHN DUKE OF BEDFORD  
 . . . . . APPOINTED MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE MOST  
 CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 4 September 1762.

Whereas some steps have been taken towards an accommodation of the differences which now subsist between us and Our good brother the Catholick King relative to the three following points, vizt.

1<sup>st</sup>. The prizes which the Court of Spain pretends to have been unjustly made at sea in time of peace.

<sup>1</sup> As in Albemarle's private instructions.

2<sup>nd</sup>. The settlements made by Our subjects in the Bay of Honduras in the West Indies and alledged to be contrary to the territorial jurisdiction of Spain ;

3<sup>rd</sup>. The claim of the Biscayans and Guipuscoans to a right of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland ;

And whereas We have judged it expedient that you should be authorized by Our full power (which We have ordered to be delivered to you herewith) to commence a negotiation in order to treat of the said matters with the Spanish Ambassador at the Court of Versailles, or such other minister as shall be duely authorized for that purpose by a full power from the Catholick King, for your better government in this important negotiation which it is hoped will finally settle those differences upon a clear and equitable footing, We have judged it proper to give you the following instructions.

1<sup>st</sup>. As to the complaints of illegal captures, you are entirely to refer any decision on that matter to Our Court of Admiralty in conformity to the general established rule observed by all nations, vizt. that the legality of captures made in time of war is to be tried and determined in the proper courts of justice of that nation which shall have made the capture.

2<sup>nd</sup>. You shall engage that orders shall be sent by Us to evacuate any settlement which Our subjects may have made in the Bay of Honduras, but upon the express condition that at the same time that such orders are given, the Catholick King shall agree to secure to Our subjects in the most authentick manner the free and entire liberty of cutting, loading and exporting logwood from thence, without any disturbance or molestation from the subjects of Spain.

3<sup>rd</sup>. As to the right of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland which has been so long claimed by Spain, and as long denied by Us, you will acquaint the Spanish minister that, as all the treaties of peace and commerce which subsisted at the time of the rupture between the two Crowns must necessarily be renewed if the present negotiation succeeds, and as those articles upon which the Catholick King chiefly founds the pretended right of some of his subjects will of course be restored, this claim of the Court of Madrid, of which no proof has hitherto been produced, will rest upon the same footing it was before the war.

4<sup>th</sup>. You are to take care that all the treaties as well of peace

as of commerce which existed at the time of the rupture between the two Crowns, are renewed in all their parts except what shall be derogated from by the future treaty, and this without any exception, notwithstanding anything which may have been stipulated to the contrary.

5<sup>th</sup>. It being understood that all conquests made or to be made as well as all restitutions and compensations are left to be discussed by the ministers plenipotentiary, you will therefore take care, supposing the case shall exist, to stipulate the most advantageous terms you shall be able to obtain.

6<sup>th</sup>. Whereas no peace either with France or Spain is admissible consistently with Our honor and the interests of Our Kingdoms which does not specifically include Our good brother and ancient ally the Most Faithful King, Our Will and Pleasure is that in treating with the plenipotentiary of the Catholick King, you do pay most particular attention to the security and interests of Portugal, and that a cessation of all hostilities against that country and the entire evacuation thereof by the Spanish troops, be made a *sine quâ non* of any peace between Us and the Catholick King.

7<sup>th</sup>. With regard to the cessation of hostilities between Us and the Crown of Spain, as well as the release of prisoners, We refer you to the orders We have thought fit to give you on these matters in Our instructions for your negotiation with the Court of France.

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 253.)

CHARLES, EARL OF EGREMONT, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO BEDFORD.

Whitehall, 7 September 1762.

. . . . I am therefore to observe upon the following paragraph of the fourth article of Your Grace's instructions, vizt. "And " provided the Court of France shall agree to the several alterations " and explanations contained in these instructions and *that the " preliminary articles with the Court of Spain shall be so far adjusted " as to be ready for signature at the same time*, and that you shall " have . . . . Us and the Most Christian King," that in order to relieve Your Grace from any doubts which the underlined part of this paragraph might occasion and to remove all possible danger of chicane which His Majesty is apprehensive of, should the preliminaries of peace be not signed exactly at the same time with both Courts, I am commanded to signify to Your Grace the King's express commands that you do insist upon signing the preliminaries



with France and Spain at the same time. I beg leave to observe that His Majesty's explicit orders now given upon this head do not in the least change the spirit or true meaning of Your Grace's instructions, at the same time that they give Your Grace great ease and security in your negotiation, for if the Court of Spain shall have "so far adjusted matters as to be ready of signature "at the same time" with France, there can be no *good* reason for not actually signing, and the more so, as events might happen to prevent it's being signed at all, and by the signature of both Crowns at the same time, the security of Portugal can be more easily and effectually provided for, an object of such high importance and which His Majesty has so much at heart that Your Grace cannot be too cautious against all attempts to elude giving that perfect satisfaction on this head which His Majesty has so clearly and strongly pointed out in Your Grace's instructions. It is needless to observe to Your Grace that the security of Portugal must necessarily imply that of all the colonies and settlements of His Most Faithful Majesty in every part of the world, and that Your Grace may want no lights which can in any shape assist you in this part of your negotiation, I have the King's commands to transmit to Your Grace the inclosed papers which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mello, Envoy Extraordinary from His Most Faithful Majesty, has put into my hands, which, tho' they contain too much to be inserted in preliminary articles, yet may afford some useful hints to Your Grace in the discussion of what relates to Portugal.

As to what regards the navigation of the Mississippi in the 6th article of the *projet*, in case that that which is proposed thro' the River Ibberville and the Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain should prove insufficient for the purposes of commerce, it is the King's pleasure that Your Grace do take particular care in the wording of what relates to this matter, to prevent all possible disputes which may arise relative to it, and to avoid above all things the tedious and unsatisfactory method of leaving anything to the discussion of commissaries. It is therefore thought proper that the experience which His Majesty's trading subjects shall have from their first attempts to use this navigation and their opinion thereupon, shall decide how far it may be practicable.

The event of the absolute refusal of the Court of Spain to proceed in the negotiation and Our making a separate peace with France upon her stipulating not to take part in the war either against

Us or Portugal, is so very improbable that it is almost superfluous to say any more on that subject, but His Majesty, determined that Your Grace shall be fully instructed in every possible point, has commanded me to signify his pleasure that in that case Your Grace should insist upon the most binding article of neutrality that can be penned, and expressed in such terms as may obviate and prevent if possible any collusion between the two Courts. And as these preliminaries are so full as to leave very little to be added in the definitive treaty, His Majesty from his attention to Your Grace's security as well as to his own satisfaction in this very important affair, chuses that Your Grace should send over the preliminary articles for his Royal inspection, before you proceed to the signature, and recommends to you to give particular orders to the messenger to make all possible haste on that great occasion, that no unnecessary time may be lost.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 253.)

Whitehall, 17 September 1762.

Separate.

. . . . . The King of Sardinia in ceding Placentia to Don Philip in 1748 reserved as a condition of that cession a reversionary right to the dutchy either upon the event of the death of Don Philip without issue male, or upon that of the succession of the King of the Two Sicilies to the Crown of Spain and His Majesty guarantied this eventual reversion by the Treaty of Aix la Chappelle.<sup>1</sup> This reversionary right of the King of Sardinia is also further supported by the Treaty of Aranjuez, in which His Catholick Majesty and the Empress Queen confirmed what the Treaty of Aix la Chappelle had stipulated relative to this matter, a measure of which His late Majesty expressed his entire approbation.

As soon as the late Catholick King's life was despaired of, the Court of Naples was desirous to know what part His Majesty proposed to take in the case of that event, upon which the King declared his good dispositions towards the family arrangements which the King of the Two Sicilies had in view with regard to the succession to Naples; but at the same time, His Majesty in strict conformity to his engagements with the Court of Turin, expressed himself firmly and explicitly as to his guarantee of His Sardinian Majesty's reversionary right to Placentia.

<sup>1</sup> Art. VII.

The Court of Naples, suspecting that the King of Sardinia might march his troops and take possession of Placentia upon the death of the Catholick King, procured the interposition of His Most Christian Majesty to prevent such a step, and in consequence thereof His Sardinian Majesty consented to remain quiet upon the promise of His Most Christian Majesty that at a peace he should either have Placentia or a satisfactory equivalent, and the Court of Turin's acquiescence on the faith of this promise was with the participation, approbation and advice of His Majesty, who was constantly consulted by the King of Sardinia upon every step which related to Placentia.

What has passed since relative to this affair amounts to an absolute and peremptory refusal on the part of the Court of Turin to receive money as an equivalent (an overture having been made to that purpose) or to propose what that equivalent should be, which should come from His Catholick Majesty. Constant declarations to this effect have been always approved by His Majesty without whose participation nothing has been done in this affair by the Court of Turin ; all the transactions relative to Placentia having been carried on with the most unreserved communications between the King and His Sardinian Majesty, the King repeatedly acknowledging the undeniable right of His Sardinian Majesty to the Plaisantin, and promising friendship and support, and His Sardinian Majesty in return expressing entire satisfaction and dependance upon the cordial assurances of His Majesty upon this head.

After this short deduction of what most materially relates to the foundation of a claim so universally acknowledged, it becomes needless to observe to Your Grace that the critical moment is now come when France is to realise those promises to the King of Sardinia which prevailed upon His Sardinian Majesty (with the King's consent and approbation) to suspend any act which might disturb the tranquility of Italy, and that it now lies with Spain to be the first mover in proposing an equivalent which may be satisfactory to the Court of Turin. It is equally superfluous to expatiate upon the great importance (indeed the almost indispensable necessity) of having this matter adjusted now in a manner which may be agreeable to the several powers respectively concerned, as it is very evident that no peace can have solidity or duration which leaves this claim of His Sardinian Majesty unsatisfied.

I am therefore by the King's express command to recommend the King of Sardinia's interests on this head to Your Grace's most particular attention, as an object in which the King's honour and the stability of the peace are equally concerned, and it is His Majesty's pleasure that Your Grace, having first consulted confidentially with the Bailli Solar upon the proper mode of conducting this matter, do without loss of time open yourself to His Most Christian Majesty's ministers upon it, and express His Majesty's wishes that the whole affair may be now settled and adjusted to the satisfaction of His Sardinian Majesty, in order that the ministers of the two Courts may in concert confer with His Catholick Majesty's minister upon the arrangement which that Court shall think proper to propose, and I have the satisfaction to acquaint Your Grace that by the assurance I have had from Count Viry it appears that the ministers of France are so well disposed towards this object, that Your Grace will meet with very little difficulty in adjusting it with them, and I have also reason to believe that arrangements may have been thought of relative to the *satisfactory* equivalent, which may be palatable even to the Court of Spain.

His Majesty's thorough confidence in Your Grace's zeal and abilities leaves it entirely to Your Grace's judgement and discretion to acquiesce in the King's name in any proper equivalent proposed and ascertained by France and Spain, from which Courts alone any overture on this head can come with propriety to His Sardinian Majesty, provided the Bailli Solar declares to Your Grace in writing that the King his master is entirely satisfied with the equivalent proposed to him and with the arrangements and precautions taken to render the same secure and effectual.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 253.)

Whitehall, 19 September 1762.

. . . . I am sorry to be obliged to inform Your Grace that in a most material point, and one always deemed to have been entirely settled, His Excellency<sup>1</sup> expressed great difficulties, I mean that which relates to the evacuation of Cleves, Wezel and Gueldres (as that matter stands in Your Grace's instructions), which difficulties he has since repeated and enforced to Mr. Grenville in such a manner as to make it necessary for me to signify to Your Grace His Majesty's commands that, in order to avoid loss of time, you do prevent any

<sup>1</sup> The Duc de Nivernais.

expectations either of relaxation or alteration with regard to this article, and that you make Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Choiseul sensible of the absolute impossibility of giving way in a point which His Majesty has considered as entirely fixed and agreed, and in which (having repeatedly communicated it to his allies) his honor is immediately concerned. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

Whitehall, 26 October 1762.

. . . . . I am now commanded to acquaint Your Grace that the inclosed *contreprojet* of preliminary articles having been deliberately examined and unanimously approved by a numerous meeting of the King's servants summoned by his order (after having had copies of the *projet* communicated to them some days before in order to form their opinions upon thorough information) to give their sentiments on this important occasion, was by them humbly submitted to His Majesty for his Royal approbation, and His Majesty having taken the same into consideration has directed me to transmit it to Your Grace as entirely conformable to his sentiments in all respects, and as being terms (subject however to this latitude which will be given Your Grace by this letter on certain points) on which alone His Majesty will consent to conclude a peace.

The inclosed *contreprojet* is thought by the King and by those of his servants who have had the honor to be consulted on this occasion, to bring matters back to that state which was the inducement to, and indeed the previous condition of the nomination of ministers plenipotentiary, and in order to shew that no favorable changes in the circumstances of the war have encouraged His Majesty to encrease those demands which were agreed upon as the foundation of the peace as far as related to France, I inclose herewith by the King's order a few observations which will sufficiently demonstrate the candour and good faith that have been observed on our side and, tho' hastily drawn up as they occurred on the first view of the *projet*, they will in Your Grace's hands amply justify the rectitude and steadiness which have invariably distinguished His Majesty's conduct throughout the negotiation. I shall therefore in obedience to His Majesty's commands only add a few explanations for Your Grace's government in settling the inclosed preliminaries with the French and Spanish ministers.



Lest the latter end of the third article relative to the distance from the South East coast of Cap Breton, to which the French fishery is limited on that side, should have the appearance of something new, I must observe to Your Grace that it is only annexing as a matter of course to the cession of Cap Breton the same reasonable condition which the Treaty of Utrecht annexed to the cession of Nova Scotia ; but should Your Grace find this objected to as new matter, it is the King's pleasure that you should give way and reduce this distance of thirty leagues from the coast of Cap Breton within which the French are not to be allowed to fish, to any lesser number of leagues, relaxing however as little as you possibly can on this head.

Though the observation of the 15<sup>th</sup> article appears to be just, vizt. that as the Court of France " proposed last year with regard " to their ally, *de ne fournir aucun secours dans aucun genre*, they " cannot object to what is proper in this article on that head " yet if any engagements of His Most Christian Majesty with the Court of Vienna should make it impossible for the French Court to comply with this without incurring the reproach of a publick breach of faith, His Majesty consents that the last clause of this article as far as relates to succours in money may be reduced into a secret article ; or, if that cannot be obtained, Your Grace is authorized to take any other kind of assurance they shall be brought to give on this head.

It is the King's pleasure that you do peremptorily insist upon one of the two cessions proposed in the 19<sup>th</sup> article,<sup>1</sup> as it is of indispensable necessity that a proper compensation should be obtained for the important restitution of the Havana : the manifest inferiority in value of either of the two compared with the conquest which is to be given up, will afford Your Grace irresistible arguments upon this occasion.<sup>2</sup>

The 17<sup>th</sup> article would not have been drawn up as you find it had it not been for the very extraordinary doctrine the Marquis de Grimaldi advanced, or rather took for granted, in his *projet de préliminaires* transmitted in his letter to the Duc de Choiseul of

<sup>1</sup> The nineteenth article provided for the restoration of Cuba and Havana, and an amendment was required that in return St. John's and other places in French occupation should be restored to the British (*S.P.* 78, nos. 252, 253).

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph is printed in *Bedford Correspondence*, Vol. III, p. 139.

the 20th July, that *le droit des Espagnols pour aller pêcher sur les Bancs de Terre Neuve étant reconnu, &c.*, and which he as constantly repeats in his observation upon the same article where he expressly affirms that *le mémoire présenté par Mo<sup>r</sup>. le Comte de Fuentes en a donné la conviction.* His Majesty thinks that an assertion so very offensive and so repugnant to the known state of this matter should be formally contradicted; Your Grace is therefore to do what you can to establish this 17th article, but in case you should find insuperable difficulties with regard to its admission as it now stands, you will preserve the spirit of it under any other form less exceptionable to the Spanish minister, taking care however clearly to contradict what Mo<sup>r</sup>. Grimaldi would establish as uncontested upon this head, which it is highly expedient to refute effectually in this treaty.

Some of the epochs for restitution laid down in the *projet* appear so short as to make it difficult if not impossible to comply with them. As to those proposed in the 22d article of the *contre-projet* now transmitted to Your Grace, His Majesty has commanded me to say that in case Your Grace should find any reason to make alterations in them, you are at liberty so to do, provided that you have it fully understood that should any delay, either from contrary winds, the embarkation of troops, or any other unavoidable causes prevent the carrying this article into execution within the stipulated time, it is not to be looked upon as an infraction of the treaty.

If Your Grace shall find it practicable to contract the term of six weeks for the exchange of the ratifications mentioned in article 26, it will be eligible so to do.

With regard to Spain, a cursory view of what has passed before and since our unavoidable rupture with that Court, must shew the moderation of His Majesty's present proposals in it's true light. It is almost superfluous to repeat to Your Grace what I have observed in former dispatches on the unprovoked conduct of the Court of Madrid at the breaking out of the war; His Majesty's efforts to prevent it; the immense expence of the expedition against the Havana, and the success of that undertaking. When all is compared with the present proposal of accepting a compensation so much inferior in value to that conquest, it is hoped that His Catholick Majesty will not hesitate upon terms so very moderate and reasonable.

Your Grace has had sufficient time to form such a judgement of the characters of the ministers you have to treat with as makes it superfluous to say anything as to the manner in which Your Grace will lay before them the important subject of this dispatch, or as to the degree of frankness or reserve with which you shall think proper to open yourself to them upon the matter of His Majesty's final resolution contained in the papers of this day, and I transmit the observations on the *contreprojet* in French, that you may without loss of time make such immediate use of them as you shall judge proper, either by communicating them to the French ministers (as His Majesty permits Your Grace on this occasion to do) or in such other manner as you shall judge most conducive to his service. I have only to add that His Majesty will be impatient to learn the result of the conferences which Your Grace will have with the French and Spanish ministers in consequence of this despatch.

I am at the same time commanded to acquaint Your Grace that in case you should be able to sign the preliminary articles both with France and Spain conformable to the *contreprojet* sent you this day (allowing nevertheless for the latitude given Your Grace in this letter to relax upon some articles) it is His Majesty's pleasure that in such case you should proceed immediately to signature with the ministers of both Courts, notwithstanding any orders which Your Grace may have heretofore received to the contrary.

(P.R.O., S.P., no. 253.)

Whitehall, 30 October 1762.

. . . . I am commanded . . . . to inform you that His Majesty has been induced to consent to postpone the meeting of Parliament to the 25<sup>th</sup> of November, before which time the King will expect to receive a final answer both from the Court of Versailles and from that of Madrid, which His Majesty flatters himself will be such as will enable him to notify to Parliament the actual signature of preliminary articles of peace. Your Grace must be so thoroughly apprized of the necessity of opening to the Parliament at their first meeting the general system of affairs that it is needless for me to take up Your Grace's time in suggesting arguments to that purpose or to enforce the expediency of making the French ministers fully sensible how indispensable it is that the present negotiation should be brought to a decision by the time abovementioned, and

you will endeavour to prevail on them to exert their utmost influence at Madrid to persuade that Court to take their final resolution without farther procrastination. For should the signature of the preliminaries be from any trivial difficulties or delays defer'd at this critical juncture, the King will be obliged to consider it as a manifest indication of a disinclination to conclude and must therefore form his speech to Parliament on a plan of continuing the war, and when once the King shall have been put under the necessity of proposing the adequate supplies for that purpose, it may not be so easy for His Majesty to shew the same facilities which his sincere desire to prevent the further effusion of blood has induced him to offer to the Courts of France and Spain in the *contreprojet* transmitted to Your Grace in my letter of the 26th instant.

This matter has been fully explained to the Duc de Nivernois who seems so convinced of the urgency of this crisis that His Excellency has promised to dispatch a courier to his Court and to represent in the strongest light the expediency of finishing this great work out of hand. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 255.)

Whitehall, 6 December 1762.

It is with great pleasure that I now transmit to Your Grace by the King's order, the inclosed draught of the articles for the definitive treaty. . . . .

Upon perusal of the inclosed articles Your Grace will find there is no such difference from the preliminaries as can affect in any degree the spirit or the meaning of what has been agreed on as the basis of the treaty . . . . yet in order to be as distinct and explicit as possible in a matter of such consequence . . . . I beg leave to make a few observations upon those points where some explanation appears necessary or where a latitude or alternative is left to Your Grace to be used discretionally, as the actual state of affairs shall require when you come to the signature of this definitive treaty. . . . .

As to the *parole royale* in the fourth article of the preliminaries which has been proposed as an additional security for the performance of an express stipulation, it is judged proper to omit these words in the 6th article of the definitive treaty and to trust the execution of His Most Christian Majesty's engagements with regard to the Islands of St. Pierre and Michelon upon the same foot-

ing upon which all the other articles of the treaty stand. At the same time, if any notice is taken of the omission of those words, Your Grace will account for it in the most complimentary way, as it was intended by all the Lords of the Council who thought it unnecessary to exact of the Most Christian King a pledge of his royal word upon this more than upon the other articles.

I am to observe to Your Grace that the omission in the 7th article marked A of the draught I now transmit of the words " jusqu' " à la Rivière Iberville et de là par une ligne tirée au milieu de cette " rivière et des Lacs Maurepas et Pontchartrain " which stood in the 6th article of the preliminaries, is merely intended to make that article consistent and to remove an inaccuracy or contradiction in the manner in which it was expressed in the preliminaries, where Your Grace will observe that the limits laid down in the first part of the article, exclude Great Britain entirely from the left or east side of the Mississippi below the Iberville, and of course from its *embouchure*, but in the subsequent part of the same article, France renounces every thing on the left of the Mississippi except the island in which New Orleans stands, and consequently the left side of the river below the island belongs to Great Britain. The omission of the above words removes this inconsistency without incroaching upon any supposed rights or claims of His Most Christian Majesty, who desired nothing more than the island in which New Orleans is situated, on the left side of the Mississippi, nor indeed is the part between the island and the sea on the left side of the River Mississippi worth the notice of France unless it is with a view to command the mouth of the river ; and Your Grace knows that the French ministers expressed no difficulties about leaving the navigation of the Mississippi free and in common to both nations. But should it be objected that the subjects of France are by this means excluded from the navigation of the River Iberville, and the Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain, I am commanded by His Majesty to send Your Grace the article marked B, which admits of a free and common navigation of the Iberville and Lakes abovementioned, and though it does not appear probable that the French minister will lay any stress upon the navigation in common of the Iberville and Lakes which can be of little use to France after their cession of the Mobile, yet, should it be insisted upon, it is His Majesty's pleasure that Your Grace do admit it as expressed in the above article B.



As nothing positive can be decided with regard to the Cunette at Dunkirk, 'till the engineer who will be forthwith sent there by the King as proposed in the 5th article of the preliminaries makes his report, I send Your Grace two articles A and B relative to this point, and it is the King's pleasure that Your Grace do make use of the article A should the report of the engineer (which shall be transmitted without loss of time to Your Grace) be against the Cunette ; but should it appear to the engineer that the Cunette is 'only of use for the purification of the air and the health of the inhabitants, in that case, Your Grace will make use of the article B.

With regard to the article which relates to the East Indies, I can add nothing to the observations which Your Grace will find in the inclosed copy of a letter of the 3<sup>d</sup>. instant from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the secret committee to M<sup>r</sup>. Wood. To those, and to my letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> past (also inclosing a letter from the same gentlemen of the 9<sup>th</sup> past to M<sup>r</sup>. Wood) I refer Your Grace for what relates to the explanatory alterations of the article which seem merely calculated to secure stability and duration to the peace in that part of the world.

As the Duc de Nivernois has given assurances from a letter of M<sup>r</sup>. de Choiseul that the evacuation of Westphalia and all Germany as well the territories of the King of Prussia as those of His Majesty's other allies by the French troops is already in great forwardness, and that it will be entirely compleated before the first of January, it has therefore been thought proper to fix upon the day in art. 15<sup>th</sup> of the inclosed draught for the execution of what has been stipulated relative to this matter in the 13<sup>th</sup> article of the preliminaries, but should it appear impracticable (from causes or accidents which M<sup>r</sup>. de Nivernois cannot foresee) to compleat the evacuation of Westphalia by the French troops before that time, or should any unexpected impediment on our side retard the execution of the orders already given for the withdrawing of His Majesty's troops, of which Your Grace shall be immediately apprised should it happen, His Majesty leaves it to Your Grace's discretion in that case to name a later day in the same month of January for the entire evacuation of the countries and places mentioned in that article, recommending it at the same time to Your Grace's particular attention not to postpone this epoch for the retreat of the respective armies a day later in January than shall

appear to Your Grace absolutely necessary, but by no means to exceed the latter end of that month.

Before I take leave of this article of the evacuations and retreat of the armies, I am by the King's orders to inform Your Grace that it has been surmised that the Saxon troops in His Most Christian Majesty's pay are to garrison Wezel and Gueldres as soon as the French troops shall have evacuated the same. Tho' the King will not allow himself to give credit to a report so injurious to His Most Christian Majesty's good faith, yet it is his pleasure that Your Grace do without loss of time, sound the French minister upon this point, and if you are not entirely satisfied with what has been reported relative to the Saxon troops is totally void of foundation, you will express His Majesty's strong disapprobation of a step so contrary to and so unworthy of the candour and frankness with which His Majesty has proceeded through the whole of this negotiation, and having made the French minister sensible of the discontent and future diffidence which must attend so indecent a measure, Your Grace will immediately report to me the effect which your remonstrances on this head shall have produced for His Majesty's information.

As to the epochs for the restitution of conquests it is to be wished that they could be fixed at a greater distance of time than that which has been stated in the preliminaries, as it will be extremely inconvenient, if not impossible, to execute what is promised on that head in the proposed time, particularly in the more distant parts. However, His Majesty, desirous of carrying the great and salutary work into effectual execution as soon as possible and cautiously avoiding any deviation from what has been already agreed upon towards the entire completion of peace, does not propose any alteration with regard to those epochs, but at the same time it is his pleasure that Your Grace should set this matter in its true light to the French and Spanish ministers, and that you do require of each of the said ministers a declaration in the name of the Kings their respective masters, which shall exonerate His Majesty from any imputation or charge of not having on his part religiously complied with the terms of the treaty, should the evacuations and restitutions not be performed in the stipulated time, which in the West Indies is barely possible should no accidents of wind and weather retard, and in the East Indies is absolutely impossible. . . . .

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 255.)

Whitehall, 23 December 1762.

Your Grace's dispatch by Padmore . . . . having been laid before the King, was afterwards communicated to such of His Majesty's servants as have been consulted in the course of this negotiation, and I have the satisfaction to acquaint Your Grace that His Majesty highly approves the very proper precautions under which Your Grace received and transmitted the French *projet* of a definitive treaty, and His Majesty is the more pleased to see that this *projet* with the Duc de Praslin's answers to Your Grace's objections were not accepted by you *ministerially*, as it appears to His Majesty that the *projet* which I had the honour to send Your Grace by my dispatch of the 6th inst. adheres more strictly to the true spirit of the preliminary articles without introducing any new inadmissible matter as is the case in many places in the French *projet*, especially at the end of the 4th and 7th articles. His Majesty therefore in thorough confidence that the French and Spanish ministers cannot, consistently with the candour they profess, raise any objections to that *projet* where the alterations from the preliminaries are merely explanatory, directs me to signify to Your Grace his pleasure that you do proceed according to the instructions contained in my last dispatch, without regard to the *projet* which you have transmitted, upon which His Majesty does not think fit to order any observation to be made, but to wait for Your Grace's report of those (if any) which may be made by the ministers of either Court to the *projet* sent from hence.

In conformity therefore to His Majesty's commands on this head, I shall not enter into those remarks upon the French *projet* which have occurred to all who have seen it, but shall confine myself entirely to Your Grace's *secret* letter in which it was enclosed, where Your Grace considers the East India article as the only one on which there remains at present any essential difference between us ; but in this you think that the French ministers will probably be very tenacious.

Your Grace will have seen by the article of the *projet* transmitted from hence that the uneasiness expressed as well by the French ministers at Paris as by the French ambassador here with regard to Orissa is entirely removed by the favourable manner in which that matter is cleared up, nor did His Majesty's candour hesitate

a moment to admit the explanation of that point so material to France in the sense which she wished to ascertain, tho' against the letter of the preliminary article, under the reasonable expectation however of meeting the same candid facility on the part of His Most Christian Majesty, where the letter admits of a construction or seems to convey a meaning which could not be intended by those who proposed it. This case occurs in the same article where, as a condition for the restitution of the French comptoirs, "Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne renonce aux acquisitions qu'Elle a faites sur la côte de Coromandel depuis le dit commencement des hostilités entre les deux Compagnies dans l'année 1749."

The meaning of fixing upon the period of 1749 could not be mistaken by France, nor could it be doubted but that the object of this clause was the renunciation of the cessions made to Duplex which occasioned that war, and therefore the French minister cannot with any colour of reciprocity or justice avail himself in this case of the letter of the article to frustrate the obvious intention of the clause, at the same time that he is indulged with a favourable explanation in the same article in a material point, of which the literal construction would deprive him.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 256.)

CHARLES DUNK, EARL OF HALIFAX, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO  
BEDFORD.

St. James's, 15 January 1763.

I make use, in the Earl of Egremont's absence, of the conveyance which is offered me by a courier dispatched by the Duke de Nivernois to his Court with an account of a conference held this morning at my house between His Excellency, the Prussian Ministers and myself, to send Your Grace a copy of the minutes taken down in writing of what passed therein.

What gave occasion to our meeting was the French Ambassador's having proposed to His Majesty that a neutrality for the Netherlands should be entered into and guarantied by the King and His Most Christian Majesty, and upon my suggesting to him that, in order to His Majesty's being enabled to recommend that measure with any hopes of success to the King of Prussia, it would be necessary that he should find his advantage therein, His Excellency's having offered that His Prussian Majesty should be put into imme-

diate possession of his countries and places upon the Lower Rhine and in Westphalia.<sup>1</sup>

When I made my report of this to the King, it occurred that it would be still absolutely necessary that the neutrality should be extended to those countries and places also, since otherwise it would prove doubly disadvantageous to His Prussian Majesty, forasmuch as the Empress Queen would be enabled by the neutrality of the Netherlands to reinforce her armies in Silesia and Saxony with part of her troops from thence, and the King of Prussia on the contrary obliged to diminish his by providing proper garrisons for the defence of the places so given up to him.

This produced the conference abovementioned, wherein Your Grace will find that that point too has been yielded by the Duke de Nivernois in favour of His Prussian Majesty, so that nothing now remains but an acceptance on the part of that Prince, which his ministers here were not authorised to give, but have agreed to lay the affair before him (as they do by a messenger whom I dispatch this evening to Mr. Mitchell) in order to their receiving his instructions and full powers thereupon.

And, in order to gain time for knowing His said Majesty's resolution, Your Grace will observe that it was unanimously agreed that the evacuation of the countries and places in question should remain suspended till the answers from Vienna and Leipzig should be received.

(*Ibid.*)

EGREMONT TO BEDFORD.

Whitehall, 1 March 1763.

. . . . His Majesty has judged it highly expedient that I should without loss of time acquaint Your Grace with a very extraordinary conversation I had on Saturday last with the Duc de Nivernois on the subject of the fishery at Newfoundland.

In order that Your Grace may understand what gave rise to this conversation, I must observe that since the success of His Majesty's arms in North America, the British fishermen have resorted more than they used formerly to do, to the northern parts of Newfoundland, where by the 13th article of the Treaty of Utrecht, a liberty had been left to the French to fish and to dry their fish

<sup>1</sup> This ungrammatical phrase is according to the original text.



on shore, and for that purpose to erect the necessary stages and buildings, but with an express stipulation "de ne pas séjourner dans ladite isle au delà du tems nécessaire pour pêcher et sécher le poisson." And as by the 15th article of the definitive treaty the same privilege is renewed and confirmed to the French, it was apprehended some disagreeable altercations might arise between the subjects of the two nations in case the French should find the best fishing stations preoccupied by the English, who from their situation might be able to reach Newfoundland first, and would probably exert themselves for that purpose in order to avail themselves of the received law among the fishermen that whoever arrives first shall have the choice of the stations, and that France would complain of this as in effect excluding them from the fishery and consequently eluding what it was certainly meant by the treaty they should enjoy, His Majesty therefore, firmly resolved to observe religiously every engagement he had entered into, and whose earnest wish is to avoid everything that could possibly create the least uneasiness between the two Courts, thought it most agreeable to the open and candid manner in which the negotiation has been conducted, that I should speak to the French ambassador on this subject, and, to obviate any dispute on this matter, that I should make him sensible of the clear meaning of the Treaty of Utrecht which expressly cedes to Great Britain the absolute property of the whole Island of Newfoundland without any exception whatever, at the same time granting to the French subjects a liberty to resort to a limited part thereof for the purpose of taking and drying fish only, and this liberty is confined to the season of the year proper for that occupation. But on my opening this matter to the Duc de Nivernois, I was greatly surprised to find His Excellency insisting with more warmth than I have hitherto observed to him in any one point that, by the Treaty of Utrecht, the French had an exclusive right to the fishery from Cape Bona vista to Point Riche, and that they had, on ceding the Island of Newfoundland to Great Britain by the 13th article of that treaty, expressly reserved to themselves such an exclusive right, which they had constantly been in possession of, 'till they were entirely drove from North America in the late war. It was needless to make use of any other argument to refute this weak reasoning than a bare reference to the Treaty of peace of Utrecht, and on my producing the same to the French Ambassador, he seemed much struck with it and desired to look

on the Treaty of Commerce, but on turning over this last, and not finding the least mention of Newfoundland therein, he endeavoured to distinguish between the spirit and the letter of the treaty, and though he could not support his assertion of an exclusive right by any stipulation in any treaty, he still insisted upon it with so much warmth as even to let drop some insinuations as if it might occasion the renewal of the war. On finding the Duc de Nivernois in this temper, I thought it better not to push the altercation any farther at that time, but to reserve myself to make a report to the King of what had passed, which having done, I am in consequence thereof commanded by His Majesty to dispatch this messenger to Your Grace and to signify to you the King's pleasure that you should lose no time in explaining this matter to the French ministers, and shewing them the impossibility of His Majesty's departing from the express letter of a treaty, the stipulations whereof are so explicit and clear that they will furnish your Grace with ample arguments to refute the unjustifiable pretensions of France and to support the indisputable rights of His Majesty's subjects who, although they may not in times past have frequented the northern parts of the Island of Newfoundland so much as the French, yet they have from time to time resorted to and exercised the fishery on every part of the coasts of that island agreeably to the most undoubted right they have by the words of the Treaty of Utrecht to which the commodores who have commanded at Newfoundland have constantly been referred by their instructions, and which treaty must still continue to be their guide with respect to such parts to which both nations have a liberty to resort. The King however thought it consistent with that candour he has always professed that the French Ambassador should be apprized of what is abovementioned, but the unreasonable manner in which he received what I said to him, and the pretention he has attempted to set up of an exclusive right of the French to fish and dry on the northern parts of Newfoundland, make it highly necessary to come to an *éclaircissement* with the Court of France. It is therefore the King's pleasure that Your Grace should forthwith state to the French ministers with the utmost precision the express stipulations of the Treaty of Utrecht, letting them see that the King must support his subjects in the rights they have thereby acquired; but at the same time that His Majesty, far from entertaining the most distant thought of rendering illusory the liberty of fishing

and drying he has agreed to leave to the French, will be willing to concur in any arrangement the Court of France may think proper to propose (provided such arrangement be not inconsistent with the undoubted rights of His Majesty's subjects according to the 13th article of the Treaty of Utrecht renewed and confirmed by the 5th article of the definitive treaty) in order to prevent all future disputes and thereby to put it out of the power of a number of illiterate fishermen to involve the two nations in fresh trouble by any unreasonable and unequitable pretensions . . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 256.)

Whitehall, 21 March 1763.

. . . . . I shall begin this letter by transmitting to Your Grace the inclosed duplicates of orders for restoring to France the islands of Martinico, Guadalupe, Marie Galante, Desirade, Gorée and Belleisle, as also those for the restitutions in the East Indies, and a copy of my letter to the directors of that Company to dispatch the necessary orders to their officers for the execution of the treaty in those parts. Your Grace will also receive herewith the orders for the cession of St. Lucia and of St. Pierre and Miquelon, to which I add a copy of a letter I have wrote by the desire of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Nivernois to the Lieutenant Governor of Placentia. With regard to Spain I transmit to Your Grace a duplicate of the order for restoring the Havanna and a copy of that which will be given for making the demolitions in the Bay of Honduras, a duplicate whereof shall be sent to Your Grace as soon as the King shall have fixed on an officer to be employed on that service. These duplicates Your Grace will exchange with the French and Spanish ministers against those of their respective Courts for the restitutions and cessions to be made on their parts, but His Majesty judges it advisable that Your Grace should not deliver the orders for the restitutions in the East Indies till the French ministers shall deliver in return for the same, the necessary orders for the restitution of Nattal and Tapanouly to such officers of the Company as shall be authorised to receive those places . . . . .

The Duc de Nivernois having acquainted me that an engineer is sent to Dunkirk to carry into execution the stipulations of the 13th article of the treaty, it is the King's pleasure that Your Grace should express His Majesty's satisfaction in this proof of good faith, and you will assure the French ministers that the King has the

firmest reliance on the punctual execution of that very essential article of the definitive treaty.

The King was much pleased with the account Your Grace gives in your letter of the 8th instant of your conversation with the Duc de Praslin in consequence of my letter of the 1st on the subject of Newfoundland. Nothing can be more reasonable or satisfactory than the clear and explicit terms in which that minister declared that France did not pretend to an exclusive right of fishing and curing on the part of that island specified in the 13th article of the Treaty of Utrecht . . . . With regard to Placentia I am to acquaint Your Grace that though His Majesty earnestly wished to have the interests of his good ally the King of Sardinia adjusted at the same time as His Majesty's own differences with the Crowns of France and Spain, yet the assurances Your Grace has so judiciously obtained from the Bailli de Solar that he is perfectly easy "entièrement tranquillisé," with regard to the disposition of France on the affair of the Plaisantine is the more satisfactory to His Majesty as that ambassador would never have given such assurances, was he not quite certain of the success of the affair, and also as thereby the friendship and sincerity of His Majesty's conduct towards the Court of Turin as fully justified at all events. Your Grace will however continue to take every proper opportunity to press the French ministers to the conclusion of the proposed convention for the final adjustment of this matter. . . . .

FRANCIS SEYMOUR-CONWAY, EARL OF  
HERTFORD  
1763-1765

LORD HERTFORD, who subsequently became first marquess, resided in Paris for less than two very uneventful years. It was his first public employment of any importance, and he returned in June 1765 to be Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and subsequently to hold several household appointments. He was a close follower of Lord North, and an opponent of Pitt until the break up of the Whig party in the days of the French Revolution. He seems to have been a generally colourless man whose chief vice was avarice, which did not make for his success as ambassador. There is a slight account of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The most remarkable feature of his embassy, from the point of view of posterity, was the appointment of the philosopher DAVID HUME as secretary to the embassy, from June 1765 to February 1766. During the interval between Hertford's departure and his successor's arrival, Hume acted as *Chargé d'affaires*. So far as I know, his despatches, which, quite apart from their authorship, are not without interest, have never been published *in extenso*, though a selection appears in *Letters of David Hume* recently edited by Mr. J. Y. T. Greig (Oxford, 1932).

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 258.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . FRANCIS SEYMOUR, EARL OF HERTFORD . . . . . APPOINTED AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO . . . . . THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 29 September 1763.

[Formal.]



(*Ibid.*)

SEPARATE AND PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . FRANCIS  
SEYMOUR, EARL OF HERTFORD . . . . . [*ut sup.*].

St. James', 29 September 1763.

1. We have ordered to be delivered to you herewith for your information, printed exemplars of the preliminary articles of peace and of the definitive treaty concluded on the 10th of February last between Us and Our good brothers, Their Most Christian, Catholick and Most Faithful Majesties, which, containing the terms of Our reconciliation with France after the late long and bloody war and renewing expressly all former engagements in as much as they are not superseded thereby, must serve for the future as the rule of proceeding between the two Courts, according to which all future disputes and differences are to be regulated so far as any provision is made relative to the subject matter of them in the said engagements. You will therefore be extremely vigilant and attentive upon all occasions which may require it, to remind the ministers of the Most Christian King of the new obligations contracted towards Us and of the old ones re-enacted by the said definitive treaty, declaring to them Our fixt intention to abide by them Ourselves invariably and to perform with the utmost punctuality whatever Our said good brother may be authorised to require

Our hands in consequence thereof.

2. As the alliance contracted between the Empress Queen of Hungary and the Most Christian King was the cause both of extending and protracting the late war, and was justly apprehended to be dangerous to the liberties of Europe, which fears for the publick safety and independence cannot but be greatly augmented by the accession of Spain to that confederacy; as it must be extremely difficult at all times, but more especially in the present exhausted state of the Empire, the neutral system of the States General and the weakness or partiality to France of the northern Powers, to oppose sufficient force to so formidable an union of the two great and potent families of Austria and Bourbon, We recommend therefore most strongly to your care and vigilance to discover, if possible, upon what foot those Courts may at present be; what new engagements they may have entered into since the war; or what they may be preparing to contract one with the other, either upon occasion of the intermarriages to be concluded or otherwise.

And the necessity of your attention to such an essential object of Our concern is greatly increased by the late change which has happened in the Spanish ministry by the dismissal of General Wall from his employments and the declared intention of placing the Marquis de Grimaldi at the head of the counsels of Spain, a minister whose attachment to the French alliance We cannot doubt of.

3. We shall expect to receive constant information from you of every step that is taken in France which may tend to strengthen the military force of that Kingdom, and especially in what concerns the augmentation of their navy, which is a point by all Our accounts very vigorously pursued at present. You will doubtless be entertained with the strongest declarations of their love of peace and their desire to perpetuate it upon the foot of the present settlement, but you will not be induced thereby to remit your attention to the objects above pointed out to you, whether of interior preparation or foreign alliance, since it is not easy to imagine that after so great disgraces both by sea and land, and after the cession of so vast a territory to Our Crown in consequence of their late unsuccessful war, the Court of France as well as that of Spain, should not have thoughts of putting themselves in a condition to recover in time their lost possessions and retrieve the reputation of their arms. And though their ability to carry such views into execution may indeed be at a considerable distance, yet it equally behoves us to be upon our guard and to watch every motion that may have such a dangerous tendency.

4. We have given instructions of the same purport to Our Right Trusty and Right Welbeloved Cousin and Councillor William Henry Earl of Rochford whom We have sent with the character of Our Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of Our good brother the Catholick King, and it is Our Pleasure that you should enter into correspondence with him as well upon that as upon the other heads of business wherein the two Courts of Versailles and Madrid may be more or less jointly concerned, that so, by a regular communication of your mutual observations and discoveries, you may be the better able to promote the interest and advantage of Our Kingdoms.

5. That you may have a more perfect understanding of the points abovementioned, in which We require the joint attention of you and of Our said Ambassador at the Court of Madrid, We have

thought fit to direct that a copy of Our private instructions to him be herewith delivered to you. And as you will see by that communication upon what particular heads of publick transaction We expect a constant watchfulness on your part and on his, and the most exact information that can be procured, We shall not therefore now enter again into the detail of them, but content Ourselves with mentioning to you the affairs of Italy, of Poland and of Portugal, and particularly that of the late *Pacte de famille* as worthy of your inquiries.

6. You will likewise keep an eye upon any thing that may pass between the French Court and that of Berlin, either in their present situation or in case of the mission of ministers respectively to each other, and to any new engagements that may be hereafter taken by France either with regard to commerce or to alliance with the Empress of Russia, and to any renewal of the subsidiary treaties with the other Crowns of the North, and you will inform Us of the part which France may take in respect to the election of a King of the Romans, and to the other affairs of the German Empire and particularly in what may concern the interests of the Protestant religion.

7. You will privately make inquiry concerning the present place of concealment of the Pretender's eldest son which We have reason to suppose is at no very great distance from Paris, and if you learn any thing which you shall judge worthy Our attention concerning him you shall give Us information thereof through Our principal Secretary of State, and particularly if you can discover in what manner he is at present supported and how far the Court of France may contribute thereto. And as it seems likely from the age and infirmities of the Pretender his father that his death cannot be at a great distance, you will be attentive to observe whether that event, when it shall happen, may make any alteration in the conduct of France towards the son, whether any compliments may be made to him upon that occasion on the part of His Most Christian Majesty, and whether it shall occasion any change in his manner of living, or any resort of people, and of whom, from any quarter to the place of his abode. But you must be particularly careful to procure such informations without noise and without shewing any extraordinary curiosity, much less anxiety, in regard to a person of so little weight and significance.

8. You shall procure the best accounts you are able of the present

state of the French finances, of the debts affecting the same and the means employed towards their discharge, of the probable efficacy of those means and the time which may be requisite towards clearing the revenues of that Kingdom thereby. And you will be careful to apprise Us of every particular upon that head which may deserve Our notice, as also with regard to that unusual spirit of opposition to the registering of the edicts of the Most Christian King which has lately appeared in many of the French Parliaments, with the judgment which you shall be able to form upon the probable consequences thereof.

9. With regard to all particular heads of business now depending between the two Courts, you will address yourself upon your arrival at Paris to Our minister plenipotentiary the Sieur Neville now residing there, whom We have directed to communicate the several orders which he has received from Us by Our Secretary of State, and which you will look upon as given to yourself, together with his own correspondence during his ministry there. Amongst those affairs what at present seems most material is the demolition which We have insisted on, not only of the Cunette, but of the other works subsisting at Dunkirk, contrary to the former treaties, having offered to leave open the Canal of Furnes for the sake of preserving, in pursuance of the definitive treaty of the 10th February last, the country from inundations and the inhabitants from the ill effects thereof upon their health. We have ordered to be delivered to you herewith the last orders which We thought fit to be given as well to Our said minister, as to Our engineer Col. Desmaretz, now residing at Dunkirk; and it is Our Pleasure that you should conform yourself likewise to the same, as We have not yet seen anything in the representations made by the French ministers against the demolition of the works erected as above, in contravention to the former treaties, which should induce Us to alter Our intentions, but are on the contrary confirmed in Our opinion of the insufficiency of those objections by the remarks made thereupon and since transmitted to Us by Our said engineer, a copy of which will be herewith put into your hands. And whereas that officer will have Our commands to inform you of everything that shall pass during his continuance there, you are to keep a correspondence with him in order to receive all necessary informations from him, and to furnish him with such lights in return as you shall judge to be beneficial to Our service.

10. You will understand by the papers to be communicated to you as above by Our Minister plenipotentiary at Paris, what steps have been taken in the sollicitation of Our just claim upon the Crown of France under the 3rd article of the definitive treaty for the very great sums expended by Us upon the maintenance of French prisoners during the late war, which has hitherto been deferred from time to time upon pretence of the difficulties which occur in settling the accounts of what is reciprocally due from Us to France for the maintenance of Ours. As this demand remains therefore hitherto unsatisfied, you are to press very earnestly and insist with the French ministers upon an immediate execution of the abovecited engagement.

11. You will have seen by the 4th, 5th, 7th, and 9th articles of the definitive treaty of Paris what vast cessions have been made thereby on the part of France to Our Crown in America ; and as this was done with the utmost regret, in consequence of an unfortunate and disgraceful war, it is natural to believe that a principal object of the endeavours of that Court for the future will be, if not to recover hereafter (as We have above suggested) what they have given up to Us by the said solemn treaty, yet at least to make the possession of Our new acquisitions as uneasy and unserviceable to Us as possible, and to improve and strengthen by all the means in their power what remains to France as well upon the continent as in the islands. Upon a supposition therefore of their acting for the future upon these ideas, you are to make it a capital point of your attention to get into the secret of their proceedings under the following heads.

12. You shall make the strictest inquiry and procure all possible information of the plans that have been already or shall be laid down and the measures intended to be pursued for the future in the conduct and management of the French interests throughout America, particularly what they may have done or meditate doing towards improving, strengthening and extending their colony of Louisiana ; whether they have any real intention of abandoning that colony and giving it up (as has been confidently asserted) to Spain ; what correspondence they may carry on with Indians belonging to the British territory ; and how far they may have been concerned by their emissaries (priests or others) in instigating the late irruption and massacres committed by the savages at the back of Our colonies.



13. As a great number of the inhabitants of the countries ceded to Us by France will without doubt remain upon their old possessions, and especially in Canada, who are become Our subjects, as it is not unlikely that the French ministers may contrive to maintain some correspondence with those people in order to keep alive in their minds their original attachments and affection, you will endeavour to trace out and discover the canals through which any such clandestine intercourse may be kept up with Our said subjects and give Us immediate notice of the same. And you are to find means of informing yourself if possible whether the French ministers have any real intention of paying the bills due to their said late subjects of Canada, according to the declaration signed by the Duc de Praslin the 10th February last.

14. What their designs may be with regard to the fishery at Newfoundland, whether to keep within the bounds prescribed by the Treaty of Utrecht and this last of Paris, or to extend and enlarge it by encroachments upon the rights of Our subjects as established and confirmed by both treaties; what use they purpose to make of the islands of St<sup>t</sup>. Pierre and Miquelon which We have yielded to them by the 6th article of the last mentioned treaty for an *abri* to their fishermen, and whether they may have formed any plan for carrying on a counterband trade with Our colonies in North America from thence.

15. What steps may have been taken or resolved for the settlement of the island of St<sup>ta</sup>. Lucia and whether it be intended to open a free port there as has been rumoured.

16. What has been done towards enlarging and strengthening their colony at Cayenne in South America, and whether a measure of that sort does not give some jealousy to Spain.

17. Upon all the foregoing heads and such others as may occur to you as having relation to any of them, We shall expect to receive information from you in proportion as, by your application, vigilance, and dexterity you shall be able to find or procure opportunities of gaining authentick intelligence, since We cannot but have a constant sollicitude with respect to concerns which are for the most part so closely connected with the essential interests of Our subjects and the advantage and honour of Our Crown.

(*P.R.O., S.P.* 78, *no.* 258.)

HALIFAX TO HERTFORD.

St. James', 18 Oct. 1763.

. . . . . Since your departure we have receiv'd the interesting news of the sudden death of the King of Poland at Dresden on the 5<sup>th</sup> inst., which Your Excellency will without doubt have met at Paris upon your arrival there.

As that event opens a new scene, and may be attended with great consequences to the present state of the North, you will easily believe that it must excite the greatest attention, and that the King will be very desirous of knowing in what light it will be seen by the Court of Versailles,<sup>1</sup> and whether they will be induced by the near relation of the Dauphiness to the present Elector of Saxony, or by any other motives, to take part in the election of a new King. And Your Excellency will likewise endeavour to discover how far the Court of Vienna may determine to interfere either in concert with France or otherwise in supplying the vacancy of the Crown of Poland. . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 8 Nov. 1763.

. . . . . The King was very well pleased to see that His Most Christian Majesty had determined to take no active part in the affair of the Polish election. Leaving the Republick an entire freedom of choice is conformable to His Majesty's own desires. It is natural for the French Court, upon account of the near relation of the Dauphiness to the Saxon family, to wish for a prince of that House. What the King's sentiments are in relation thereto Your Excellency will see by the inclosed letter from His Majesty to the Elector,<sup>2</sup> in answer to one . . . . . which was written by that

<sup>1</sup> From here to the end in cypher.

<sup>2</sup> Mon frère. C'est avec un vrai chagrin que je viens de recevoir la nouvelle que vous m'annoncez de la mort de mon bon frère le Roy de Pologne, et je partage bien sincèrement la juste douleur qu'un fils si affectionné ressent de la perte d'un bon Roy et d'un tendre père.

A l'égard de l'élection d'un successeur au trône de Pologne, si mes vœux sont exaucés, elle se fera de manière que les droits et privilèges de cette République soient toujours respectés, et qu'il n'arrive rien de fâcheux qui puisse troubler le système pacifique de l'Europe, si heureusement rétabli après une guerre sanglante et ruineuse.

Toutes mes vœux sont dirigées vers un objet si juste et si salutaire, et je

Prince to desire His Majesty's interest and assistance in his favour upon occasion of the vacancy of the Polish throne. . . .

m'attirerois le reproche d'avoir commencé les troubles que je cherche soigneusement à prévenir, si je me montrois d'avance trop intentionné à soutenir les prétensions d'aucun concurrent, d'autant plus que mes Royaumes ne sont uniquement intéressés dans les affaires de Pologne que par rapport à mes alliés.

Au reste, vous pouvez compter sur mon amitié. Veuille le Ciel vous combler de ses bienfaits et prolonger vos jours pour la gloire de votre maison et pour le bonheur de vos sujets. Je suis avec beaucoup d'affection, mon frère, Votre bon frère GEORGE R.

à St. James, le 25<sup>e</sup> d'octobre 1763. (S.P. 78, no. 258.)

CHARLES LENNOX, 3rd DUKE OF RICHMOND,  
LENNOX AND AUBIGNY

1765-1766

ON the recall of Hertford, the Duke of Richmond was appointed ambassador, but only resided a bare three months (11 November 1765—5 February 1766) leaving his brother Lord HENRY LENNOX,<sup>1</sup> secretary and *chargé d'affaires* until the approach of Rochford. It is perhaps unnecessary to remind the reader that this duke is the famous Whig leader who was the advocate of annual parliaments and universal suffrage. His life is fully treated of in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 268.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHARLES, DUKE OF RICHMOND, LENNOX AND AUBIGNY, APPOINTED AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 24 October, 1765.

[Formal, except for clause 9, which runs :—]

9. Whereas a representation from Our commissioners of trade dated the first of April 1715<sup>2</sup> has been laid before Us, proposing a method to be set on foot for giving regular accounts of the state of the commerce of Our subjects in foreign parts, and of the increase and decrease of the same, We, having approved of the said proposal, have ordered it to be put into your hands, and Our will and pleasure is that pursuant thereto, you do use your best care and diligence that accounts of trade be transmitted from time to time

<sup>1</sup> For whom see *Dictionary of National Biography* (Lord George Henry Lennox).

<sup>2</sup> *Sic* for 1765.

from such factories of British merchants as are settled in any parts of the Most Christian King's dominions.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 268.*)

SEPARATE AND PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHARLES, DUKE OF RICHMOND, &C.

St. James', 24 October 1765.

1. We have ordered to be delivered . . . . .<sup>1</sup>
2. As the alliance contracted . . . . . the neutral system of the States General, and the weakness or uncertain dispositions, of the northern powers . . . . . to contract, or have contracted one with the other, either upon occasion of intermarriages or otherwise . . . . . in the Spanish ministry, particularly by the dismissal of General Wall from his employments, and the placing the Marquis de Grimaldi . . . . .
3. We shall expect to receive constant information . . . . . which is a point they give great attention to, and on which both their inclination to engage in any hostile measures, and their ability to prosecute them with effect, will principally depend. You will doubtless be entertained . . . . . And tho' their ability to carry such views into execution may possibly be at a distance . . . . .
4. We have given instructions . . . . . Rochford, Our ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary . . . . .
5. That you may have a more perfect understanding . . . . . We expect a constant watchfulness on your part and on his, We shall not therefore now enter into the detail . . . . . the affairs of Italy, the terms and extent of the Family Compact and connexion with the House of Austria, and in a most particular manner, what concerns their views in respect to the dominions of Portugal, whether in Europe or America, and how far the French Court enters into, or gives encouragement to any ambitious designs they may have formed on that side.
6. You will likewise keep an eye . . . . . or to any renewal of the subsidiary treaties or other engagements with the other Crowns of the north. . . . .
7. You will privately make enquiry . . . . . to the place of his abode. But as this person's situation is made an object of atten-

<sup>1</sup> For the text of the words omitted in these instructions see the Separate and private instructions to Hertford, 29 September 1763 (above, p. 85).



tion rather as a means of proving the real inclinations of the Court of France towards Us than from any personal consequence or weight in himself, you will be careful to use the utmost privacy and secrecy in all such enquiries.

8. You shall procure the best accounts . . . . . the probable consequences thereof, as well as of the late acts of the French assembly of the clergy, and any future steps they may take.

9. With regard to all particular heads of business . . . . . Paris, to Our Secretary of Embassy David Hume, now residing there . . . . . by Our Secretary of State, or which have been received by the Earl of Hertford, Our late Ambassador Plenipotentiary at that Court, which you will look upon as given to yourself. He will likewise have directions to communicate to you such parts of his own or the said Earl's correspondence as may be necessary for your information. What at present seems most material is the demolition which We have insisted on, not only of the jettées but of the other works subsisting at Dunkirk, contrary to the former treaties, having offered to leave open the canal of Furnes, or some other sufficient drain of the waters for the sake of preserving, in pursuance of the definitive treaty . . . . .

10. You will have seen . . . . .

11. You shall make the strictest enquiry . . . . .

12. As a great number of the inhabitants . . . . . give Us immediate notice of the same. And as the debts and demands of His Majesty's [*sic*] Canadian subjects on the French Government still remain unsatisfied, you are in the strongest terms to insist on their receiving immediate satisfaction on that head, and to acquaint the ministers of that Court that His Majesty [*sic*] can no longer permit the stipulations of the late treaty on that point to be evaded, or justice denied, or delayed to His [*sic*] subjects there, who have already suffered too severely by so long a suspension of the promised payment.

13. You are to discover what may be the designs of the French Court with regard to the fishery at Newfoundland . . . . .

14. What steps may have been taken . . . . .

15. What has been done towards enlarging . . . . .

16. Upon all the foregoing heads and such others as may appear to you of importance to the honour and advantage of Our Crown or the interests of Our subjects, we shall expect to receive information from you in proportion as you shall be able to find or procure

opportunities of gaining any authentick intelligence, having the utmost confidence that your zeal for Our Service and your prudence and vigilance and activity will leave no proper means untried of prosecuting these great and essential ends of your mission.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 269.*)

HENRY SEYMOUR-CONWAY, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO RICHMOND.

St. James', 31 January 1766.

I had before received the account of the Pretender's death mentioned in Your Grace's of the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. In mine of the 3<sup>d</sup> December I just mentioned the resolution which I understood the Pope had taken to make the conduct of the Courts of France and Spain the rule of his own in regard to the manner of treating the Pretender's son, upon the event which was expected, of the Pretender's death. Those pretensions, equally repugnant to the laws of Great Britain and to the inclinations of the people are in themselves too idle to deserve any serious attention, as His Majesty's right cannot be affected thereby, but tho' his right cannot be affected, his dignity cannot but be touched if any Court whatever shall presume to give the least sanction to the claims, however absurd, of a pretender to his throne. The absurdity indeed of the claim aggravates the affront, and His Majesty will find his honour engaged to resent such an indignity. I must desire Your Grace to represent this to the French Court in the strongest terms, as I have received accounts that the French Ambassador at Rome has so far forgot himself as to use his endeavours to dissuade the Court of Rome from the prudent resolution she has taken. You will observe to the French ministry that they are not only bound by the general respect due to every power in alliance with the French King, but that they are absolutely bound by treaty, as guarantees of the succession, to support His Majesty's right. It will therefore ill become them to shew any disrespect to those rights they are bound to defend.

In short, I am to inform Your Grace that His Majesty will not be satisfied with that Court's simply not setting the example to the Court of Rome as mentioned in Your Grace's of the 19<sup>th</sup> of December. In consequence of the obligation which the French King lies under, as a power in amity with His Majesty, by treaty bound as guarantee of the succession, it is expected that the French

Ambassador at Rome should be instructed to discountenance any renewal of those pretensions <sup>1</sup> which are derogatory to His Majesty's honour, and contradictory to the tenor of treaties which bind all the greatest powers of Europe . . . . .

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact his action was immediately disavowed.

WILLIAM HENRY NASSAU DE ZUYLESTEIN,  
4th EARL OF ROCHFORD  
1766-1768

LORD ROCHFORD was the first professional diplomatist to be sent to Paris under King George III, and he was well fitted for the post, being transferred from Madrid, where he served with distinction, and could therefore do good service at Paris in view of the machinations of which the members of the Family Compact were at that moment suspected. His period of embassy was more eventful than those of his predecessors, as the question of Corsica provided a welcome change from the wearisome debates on the Manila ransom, the Canadian paper and Mrs. Brown of Dunkirk which formed and were to continue to form the chief subjects of correspondence between the Courts at this time. In June 1768 he was made Secretary of State for the Northern department, and he left Paris 1 September.

He had as secretary to the Embassy, STANIER PORTEN, previously consul at Madrid, who had been appointed in July 1766 and took charge in October 1766 after Lord Henry Lennox' audience of leave (4 October) until Rochford's arrival 28 October, and again during Rochford's absence in the summer of 1767. In June 1768 he left Paris on Rochford's transference to London as Secretary of State, and was succeeded by the Hon. ROBERT WALPOLE.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 271.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WILLIAM HENRY, EARL OF ROCHFORD,  
APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 18 October 1766.

[Formal, being a reproduction of those to Richmond; see above, p. 93.]

SEPARATE AND PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . EARL OF  
ROCHFORD [&c.].St. James', 18 October 1766.<sup>1</sup>

1. We have ordered to be delivered to you . . . . .
2. As the alliance contracted . . . . . intermarriages or otherwise.

3. Whereas there appears to be a connection of the most intimate and extraordinary nature between the Courts of France and Spain ever since the signing of the late Family Compact, you are to leave no possible means untried to penetrate into the nature and tendency of this connection as well as the instruments and means by which it is supported, and to learn whatever secret resolutions may have been taken by the two Courts, you are to be attentive to all transactions between them, particularly to any cessions which may have been publicly or secretly made or are proposed to be made by one to the other in the West Indies, South America or elsewhere. And whereas accounts have been received of great discontents in the Kingdom of Spain and differences of the most serious nature which have arisen between His Catholick Majesty and his subjects, you are to make the state of that Kingdom in every respect a chief and principal object of your enquiries and from time to time transmit the best accounts you can procure for Our information.

4. Whereas the late increase of the French trade in several different branches is so great as to merit most exceedingly the attention of Great Britain, you are to apply your utmost diligence to learn not only the general state of it, but likewise whatever regulations have been lately or may during your residence be made for the improvement of it, particularly of the state of their woollen and other manufactures. And as We are informed that there are certain manufactures carried on under the direction of British subjects who have either been prevailed on to leave their native country by false hopes of advantage or are obliged to absent themselves, being proscribed by law on account of the late rebellion or other causes, you are to represent to Us such cases as you think deserve Our Royal mercy or encouragement. You are to enquire without delay into the extent of their trade to Lisbon, the several

<sup>1</sup> For the remainder of the text see the corresponding instructions to Richmond.



articles which compose it, and the encouragement which may be given to it by treaty or otherwise. And whereas the trade of sugar from the West Indies makes one of the most lucrative branches of their commerce, you are to make it your business to come at a full knowledge of the extent of it as well as of their management of it, both in Europe and in the West Indies; you are likewise to learn what effects the declaration of Port Royal in Jamaica and Prince Rupert's Bay and Roseau in Dominique to be free ports may have upon their trade, and how these regulations are received by the French in Europe and in the colonies.

5. Having had reason to suspect a spirit of encroachment in the French upon the coast of Africa by the accounts We have received from thence, you are not only to represent in the strongest manner to the French ministry the consequence of such a disposition, as no part of that trade, from its nature and importance, can cease to be an object of Our constant attention, but likewise send immediate accounts of any new settlement made or projected in that part of the world.

6. We shall expect to receive . . . . .

7. We shall give instructions to the same purport to the person whom We shall appoint to be Our Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of Our good brother the Catholick King . . . . .

8. That you may have a more perfect understanding . . . . .

9. You will likewise keep an eye . . . . .

10. You will privately make enquiry . . . . .

11. You shall procure the best accounts . . . . .

12. With regard to all particular<sup>1</sup> . . . . .

13. You will have seen . . . . .

14. You shall make the strictest enquiry . . . . . interests throughout America. What correspondence they may carry . . . . . in instigating the savages to distress Our back settlements.

15. As a great number of the inhabitants . . . . . give Us immediate notice of the same.

16. You are to discover what may be . . . . .

17. What steps may have been taken . . . . . open a free trade there as has been rumoured.

18. What has been done towards . . . . .

19. Upon all these foregoing heads . . . . .

<sup>1</sup> *mutatis mutandis*.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 272.*)

WILLIAM, EARL OF SHELBURNE, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO  
ROCHFORD.

Most secret.

Whitehall, 23 January 1767.

. . . . . As to the totality of the Manilla-ransom being expected in consequence of our desisting, for the present, from settling the Faulkland Isles, I ought to observe to Your Excellency that in every conversation I have had with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Masseran, he was uniform in his declaration that as the King of Spain's dignity was alone in question and his desire of strict justice was the sole motive of his conduct, he should in consequence always think himself obliged to pay the whole, or none. It was therefore natural to understand that, when it was proposed to pay the Manilla ransom, the whole and not a part was meant . . . . .

(*Ibid., no. 273.*)

Whitehall, 13 November 1767.

. . . . . Accounts having been received from the northern Courts in regard to what has passed in Poland, suggesting that, tho' an absolute submission to the will of the Empress of Russia has taken place there, there reigns, nevertheless, amongst the Polish nobility such a spirit of discontent and resentment that the least prospect of foreign assistance might kindle a great flame in that country, Your Excellency will give your attention to penetrate whether the courts of Versailles or Vienna will continue to look with an indifferent eye on the affairs of that Republick.

(*Ibid., no. 275.*)

Whitehall, 27 May 1768.

No. 19. Most secret.

. . . . . Since I last wrote to Your Excellency, the King's servants have by His Majesty's order had two meetings on the subject of Your Excellency's last letter, and the other intelligence received relative to Corsica. I am now to acquaint Your Excellency that upon the fullest consideration of the subject they have unanimously submitted it to His Majesty as their humble opinion " that " Your Excellency should be directed to acquaint the French " ministry that the Court of France becoming possessed of the

“ island of Corsica must be considered by the King as a step totally  
“ departing from that principle so often laid down by that Court  
“ and observed by this, and what has been repeatedly asserted to  
“ be the guide of every measure of theirs, that the extension of  
“ territory, force or possession of any of the great powers of Europe  
“ cannot be a matter of indifference to their neighbours, and may  
“ consequently endanger the peace of Europe ; that Your Excel-  
“ lency should further observe from His Majesty that such a change  
“ in their conduct gives very just ground to distrust the former  
“ professions of the Court of Versailles, who must not expect from  
“ His Majesty the same confidence if measures so contrary to their  
“ frequent declarations are pursued by them.”

The Count du Chatelet calling upon me on Tuesday last gave me an opportunity of acquainting him that I had the King's orders to write to Your Excellency on this subject. He continued however to treat it as a matter not deserving the serious attention of His Majesty, affirming that it could never be considered in any other light than as a defensive measure on the part of his Court to prevent the danger that might arise from the compleat success of the malecontents, by the neighbouring coast of France lying, in case of any quarrel with them, entirely exposed and open to their ravages. It is I am sure unnecessary for me to observe to Your Excellency the extravagance of the supposition that the malecontents of Corsica, who must necessarily think themselves sufficiently happy in establishing their own independency, should ever venture to provoke the anger of such a power as France ; but he likewise added that, by what he could perceive, people in general in London considered it in the same light, and by no means as an interesting object to this country, which last particular I mention to Your Excellency, that, in case it should be taken notice of by the Duke of Choiseul, you may be able to prevent his being deceived by misjudging the genius of our people, who for the most part appear so occupied with domestick transactions that the interest really taken in foreign affairs naturally escapes the observation of a foreigner who cannot have sufficient experience of this country to foresee the effect which events will have. In truth, whether they mean to avail themselves of the possession for their own benefit, or to make it of use in cementing their alliances, is equally interesting to Great Britain. In the first case, if peace be their object, the expence necessarily attending it must make it no desire-

able acquisition, whereas in case of war, one need but look upon the map to see its importance with a view to offence as well as defence. Not to mention the recruits, the sailors it may supply, the timber for shipbuilding, &c., it will be from its situation at once a protection to their own coast, and an effectual bridle on the port of Leghorn, as well as a great addition of power in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, if such an intention be concealed under it, as that mentioned by Mr. Porten, of making a provision for the Duke of Parma, it indicates the strongest and most secret union with the House of Austria, as well as a slight to this country, to conclude such a transaction without consulting it, which the King has a right to expect as a contracting party in the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, if not as a great power who, as France so frequently says of herself, cannot be uninterested in any transactions of importance in Europe.

I must own to Your Excellency that upon the whole it appears to me a very sufficient ground to apprehend a change of system in the French Court, as far as the professions of any Court deserve the name of a system. It remains however to be seen what are the terms of this new treaty or convention which the Count du Chatelet persists so strongly in maintaining to be harmless in regard to the rest of Europe, and such as they will, as soon as it is concluded (for he affirms it is not so at present) instantly communicate for His Majesty's satisfaction.

In the meantime it depends on Your Excellency's coolness and firmness in your conversations with the Duke of Choiseul to give him a right impression of His Majesty's sentiments, and on your sagacity and attention in observing and watching the consistency of that minister's conversations one with another, and comparing them with the other intelligence you can collect, to transmit for His Majesty's information correct notions of the views of France as far as they can be penetrated, that His Majesty may conduct his measures accordingly. In Your Excellency's manner of treating this subject with the Duke of Choiseul, you will take care to preserve the utmost temper, so as to allow that minister an opportunity of retracting the measure, if he comes to see the danger it may be attended with, and to give His Majesty time to know the sentiments of other Courts equally interested in whatever step the French Court may take in regard to Corsica, who have been as yet silent upon the subject.

Since writing the above, I have received intelligence, of the truth of which there can be no doubt, that the Corsican general Paoli has refused the offer of France to leave him in possession of the rest of the island, provided he ceded to them *in perpetuity* the province of Capo Corso with the capital of the island, drawing a line from Bastia so as to include the port of Massiorenzo. I further understand that the Corsicans are determined to maintain their independency, which they apprehend more likely to suffer by so powerfull a nation as the French getting footing in the island than even by submitting to the conditions offered by the Genoese.

P.S.—This intelligence is meant for Your Excellency's private information and not to be referred to in your conversations with the Duke of Choiseul. It remains to be seen whether it will produce any alteration in the French plan.

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 275.)

Whitehall, 1 July 1768.

Secret, no. 23.

I had the honour to acquaint Your Excellency in my last that the King had been pleased to refer your letter of the 18th ult<sup>o</sup> inclosing the copy of the treaty concluded between France and Genoa to a meeting of his principal servants, since which Your Excellency's letter of the 23rd ult<sup>o</sup> has been received.

I have now the King's orders to acquaint Your Excellency that His Majesty has been graciously pleased to approve the unanimous opinion of his servants that the copy of the treaty communicated through Your Excellency serves only to confirm the idea first conceived that an absolute cession is meant of the island of Corsica to the French, and as such His Majesty can look upon it in no other light than as a *departure* from the system hitherto professed by the French Court, which must greatly endanger the confidence that has hitherto subsisted between the two Kingdoms . . . . .

. . . . . In the mean time I am to acquaint Your Excellency that nothing could surprize His Majesty more than the idea mentioned by Your Excellency "que nous étions un peu adoucis sur cette affaire," His Majesty's opinion having been allways the same upon it, nor has there been the smallest difference in the sentiments of His Majesty's ministers on the subject. If this notion should be encouraged or propagated with the design to promote particular views in the Court of France, or those of any particular



interest or party there, His Majesty expects Your Excellency to take the properest means in your conversations with other foreign ministers or with persons of weight with that Court or the publick to contradict any such assertion, and to prevent it's being imagined that it was with His Majesty's consent, knowledge or approbation such a step was taken, but on the contrary to set in a strong light the imprudence and unadvisedness of such a measure, to such persons as Your Excellency shall conceive to be well disposed to peace, and who must consequently see with uneasiness enterprizes which must endanger it.

(*Ibid.*, no. 276.)

SHELburnE TO WALPOLE.<sup>1</sup>

Whitehall, 16 Sept. 1768.

No. 1. Secret.

Lord Rochford having, as you have acquainted me, given you the fullest information of all that passed between this Court and that of Versailles on the affairs depending, I need only refer you to the conversations you have had with him, and to the tenor of all my dispatches and the instructions contained in them for the general rule of your conduct.

I write to you at present only in consequence of the last conversation which the Duke of Choiseul had with Lord Rochford, in which, at the same time that he express'd a determination not to give the least way in the affair of Corsica, he declared that the conditions of the last treaty should be strictly fulfilled, and further that there was no proof he would not give of their pacifick disposition, provided it was consistent with the honour of France. I am to signify to you the King's commands in consequence, that whenever a proper opportunity presents itself in your conversation with the Duke of Choiseul, you take occasion to sound with address whether that minister meant any thing substantial by those general expressions, as well as what proofs the Court of France may be willing to give of such a disposition, such as, for instance, the compleat demolition of Dunkirk which has hitherto been evaded under various pretexts which now stand refuted, it having been proved upon a long and fair trial that the salubrity of the air cannot be affected by it. The late deputation of the magistrates of the

<sup>1</sup> *Chargé d'affaires.*

town to Mr. Frazer to obtain his approbation of repairing the Vanne or sluice of Kestelort on the canal of Furnes . . . . will afford you a natural opportunity . . . . of introducing that subject, in which you may set out in a strong light His Majesty's complacency in having permitted the sluice to stand, notwithstanding the entire demolition of the port is provided by treaty. Your late arrival from Spain will likewise give you an occasion to try the present inclinations of the Duke of Choiseul on the affair of the Manila ransom with regard to which he some time ago express'd so much desire to bring about an amicable adjustment between our Court and that of Madrid, but on this and every occasion, you will take the greatest care not to suffer the French ministers to impose general professions not only unaccompanied but contradicted by their conduct.

Our accounts from every part of Europe give us the strongest proof that the French instead of gaining honour by their successes in Corsica, lose ground in the eyes of every power, by their interested and deceitful conduct whilst they acted as mediators, and the manner of breaking their truce with the Corsicans.

Lord Rochford tells me you were aware before he left Paris of the negotiations for an exchange of ministers and a treaty under the name of a treaty of commerce between France and the King of Prussia. I may at the same time acquaint you that there is reason to believe that France has been carrying on in different parts of Germany negotiations for the hiring of troops, but I must desire that you will observe the utmost secrecy with regard to this last intelligence which makes it proper to attend to the language of the Imperial minister, and to discover if possible how the Court of Vienna feels the new system which France appears to have in view and whether the friendship between those two powers subsists in so much force as the Duke of Choiseul took pains to make Lord Rochford understand in his last conversation.

The breach between the House of Bourbon and the See of Rome appear [*sic*] to grow wider every day, which I mention as it may possibly open some useful channels of intelligence to you by means of the Church.

## SIMON HARCOURT, 1st EARL HARCOURT 1768-1772

THE most noticeable feature of Lord Harcourt's embassy was the frequency and length of his absences from duty. He was away from his post for five and a half months in 1769, six months in 1770, and four and a half months between 7 September 1771 and 22 January 1772. He left again on leave six months later and never returned to his post, having then been appointed to his well known Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. The period was not one of profound tranquillity, and one would have thought that such events as French aggression in the Mediterranean, the dispute over the Falkland Isles, the outbreak of war in the East, the fall of Choiseul and the ever-growing menace of the American colonies would have kept the ambassador watchful at his post. In his absences the duty of *chargé d'affaires* was taken in 1769 and 1770 by the Hon. ROBERT WALPOLE, who had in 1769 received credentials as minister plenipotentiary and in 1770 had to deal with the opening scenes of the crisis about the Falkland Isles. In 1771 and 1772, after Walpole's departure, his place was taken by Colonel JOHN BLAQUIÈRE, who was secretary and right-hand man to Harcourt during his Viceroyalty.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 277.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SIMON, EARL HARCOURT, APPOINTED AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

[Whitehall], 30 December 1768.

[Formal.]

## SEPARATE AND PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS, &amp;c.

[Whitehall,] 30 December 1768.

1. We have ordered to be delivered to you . . . . .<sup>1</sup>
2. As the alliance . . . . .<sup>1</sup>
3. We shall expect to receive . . . . .<sup>2</sup>
4. We have given instructions . . . . .<sup>3</sup>
5. That you may have a more perfect understanding . . . . .<sup>2</sup>
6. You will likewise keep an eye . . . . .<sup>2</sup>
7. You will privately make enquiry . . . . .<sup>4</sup>
8. You shall procure the best accounts you shall be able . . . . .<sup>4</sup>
9. With regard to all particular heads . . . . .<sup>4</sup>
10. As a great number . . . . . immediate notice of the same.<sup>2</sup>
11. You will have seen . . . . .<sup>4</sup>
12. You shall make the strictest enquiry . . . . .<sup>4</sup>
13. You are to discover . . . . .<sup>5</sup>
14. What steps may have been taken.<sup>4</sup>
15. What has been done . . . . .<sup>4</sup>
16. Upon all the foregoing heads . . . . .<sup>4</sup>

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 277.)

THOMAS, VISCOUNT WEYMOUTH, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO  
HARCOURT.

St. James', 31 January 1769.

No. 3.

. . . . . At the same time that I am directed to recommend to Your Excellency to continue that cool and temperate manner which always gives weight to negotiation, it is the King's pleasure that you express yourself with as much firmness as calmness on the impropriety of such a menace as that held out by the Duc de Choiseuil with regard to His Majesty's subjects in America,<sup>6</sup> should it be repeated; and it is the King's pleasure that you look for an opportunity of introducing that subject and that you ask

<sup>1</sup> As in Hertford's instructions.<sup>2</sup> As in Richmond's instructions.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *mutatis mutandis*.<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>5</sup> As in Rochford's instructions.<sup>6</sup> Viz. that if subscriptions on behalf of the Corsicans were got up in England, as Boswell proposed, he, Choiseul, would raise subscriptions on behalf of the Americans. (Cf. Birkbeck Hill's edition of Boswell's *Johnson*, Vol. II, p. 59, n. 1.)

that minister very seriously whether it is his intention that you should report language of that sort to your Court, language which the King cannot receive consistently with his own honor or the dignity of his Crown, from any power whatever. The warmth of the Duc de Choiseuil's temper may perhaps justify particular indulgence towards him when Your Excellency sees that such unwarrantable language is the effect of those hasty sallies to which he is so much liable, but if in his cooler moments you find it to be his invariable language, founded on system, and a certain indication of that treatment we are to expect from the French Court upon all occasions, it becomes highly proper that it should be understood as soon as possible . . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

WILLIAM HENRY, EARL OF ROCHFORD, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO  
HARCOURT.

St. James', 31 March 1769.

No. 7.

. . . . . We know for certain that the French East India Company has for some time corresponded with those Indian powers that are hostile to Great Britain, particularly with Heyder Ally; any farther information therefore that can be collected relative to Mo<sup>r</sup>. la Motte's mission may be material. We also know that the French have intended enlarging their small settlement at Madagascar, but we have no intelligence of so considerable a number of European troops being sent out thither as six hundred, which M<sup>r</sup>. Chamier<sup>1</sup> has mentioned to Your Excellency, nor have we reason to believe that the effective troops at Mauritius and Bourbon amounted to two thousand when the last ships sailed from those islands . . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 279.)

ROCHFORD TO WALPOLE, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY.

St. James', 1 September 1769.

No. 19 [circular].

Lord Weymouth being gone out of town for a few days I send you inclosed by His Majesty's command the copy of a declaration

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Chamier (*v. D.N.B.*, *s.v.* Anthony Chamier), a secretary in the War Office, later Under-Secretary of State for War.



from the Court of France which Mo<sup>r</sup>. Francès the French minister residing here delivered to His Lordship,<sup>1</sup> as it does not appear from your letters that it has been communicated to you by the French ministry, and I also send you the answer to that declaration<sup>2</sup> which it is His Majesty's pleasure you should take the earliest opportunity to deliver to the Duc de Choiseul without any observation ; for as His Majesty's language has been always consistent upon this subject, the answer to the declaration contains no new matter which can possibly want explanation.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 279.)

St. James', 19 December 1769.

No. 30.

. . . . . We have certain advices from Bengal that the French factory at Chandernagore has begun a work round that town in direct breach of the 11th article of the Treaty of Paris, and that they have been deaf to all the remonstrances of the company's servants on that head. As there is not the least doubt of the certainty of this fact, it is the King's pleasure that Your Excellency should, without loss of time, lay it before Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Choiseul in full confidence that he will disavow the fact and give an order for erasing any fortifications which may have been erected at Chandernagore contrary to treaty, which it is the King's pleasure Your Excellency should demand, not only as absolutely necessary for His Majesty's satisfaction on this head, but not less so to dispel the jealousies and alarms which have already too much affected the commercial part of both nations.

It would be injurious to His Most Christian Majesty's good faith to suppose any orders sent from Europe upon this head. You will cautiously avoid giving Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Choiseul any suspicion of our

<sup>1</sup> Announcing the annexation of Corsica to France.

<sup>2</sup> Aussitôt que Sa Majesté Britannique a eu avis des intentions du Roy Très-Chrétien de prendre possession de l'isle de Corse, Elle n'a pas tardé de faire connoître par le canal de son ambassadeur à Paris, ses sentimens sur une entreprise qui pourroit troubler la tranquillité générale, en donnant atteinte aux intérêts de différens Etats d'Italie, heureusement établis et confirmés par les derniers traités de paix. Si la communication de la convention de Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne avec la République de Gènes n'a pas calmé les inquiétudes de Sa Majesté sur cette affaire, la déclaration du Roy Très-Chrétien doit les augmenter, et démontre que ces sentimens étoient bien fondés.

entertaining such an idea, nor would it be less unfair to entertain a doubt of the proper reception which that minister will give to Your Excellency's application on this head after what has so lately passed between you.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, to support or not to disavow a direct infraction of treaty would be so little short of a declaration of war that we will not suppose there can be hesitation on this head. If there should, Your Excellency is to demand a categorical answer, but in doing this, should it be necessary, Your Excellency cannot be too temperate because you cannot be too firm.

As this is so immediately connected with the account you give of 900 men going out to the Mauritius, Your Excellency will also mention that report to the French Minister, and state to him the alarm which so considerable a reinforcement sent out in time of peace must create, and as you will on your part give the French minister every satisfaction with regard to His Majesty's pacifick inclinations, as well in India as in every other part of the world, so it is hoped you will meet with the same unreserved explanation from him.

(*Ibid.*, no. 280.)

WEYMOUTH TO WALPOLE.

St. James', 20 June 1770.

No. 15. Secret.

Before I received your letter of the 13th inst. I was informed of the equipment of two ships of the line and two frigates at Toulon . . . . with two bomb ketches, of the names of the commodore and other officers who were appointed to that squadron and that they were destined for Tunis and might probably be joined by [3 ships] already at sea. The day I received this information I sent to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Francès to desire to know the intention of this armament. He was not then at home, but I have since seen him and he tells me he is directed by his Court to acquaint me with the destination of a squadron for Tunis in order to block up that port. Tho' I have for some time expressed my general apprehensions about what has been carrying on at Toulon and my suspicions that His Most Christian Majesty, dissatisfied with the appearance and still more with the progress of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean, would under some pretence or other, be prepared to

<sup>1</sup> An offer by Choiseul to allow Brest and Toulon to be inspected by British agents.

obstruct their operations, yet I did not imagine that the French minister would so soon make it necessary to come to an explanation on this head, by avowing the intention of his Court to send some frigates to the Morea to enquire into the truth of what has happened there relative to a ship with the French Consul on board stopt and stript in her passage from Patrass to Zante, and other complaints made by the Marseillois of the destruction made by the Turks surprizing the Greeks at Patrass and burning houses and effects, the loss of which, to the French alone, was likely to amount to 5 or 6 millions.

Having lost no time in laying a matter of this very serious consequence before the King, I am commanded to signify to you His Majesty's pleasure that you immediately wait upon the Duc de Choiseul and acquaint him that having reported that part of his conversation with you on the 12th inst. which related to the sending of those frigates, His Majesty could not help expressing great surprize at so extraordinary a measure as that of sending a force towards the Morea upon this occasion without any previous complaint or representation made of the injuries which are alledged as the foundation of that measure. Those acts of violence which the Duc de Choiseul stated to you must necessarily afford such circumstantial proofs of the damages done as would bring it home to the aggressors, and would authorize a peremptory demand of satisfaction from the Porte whose subjects are accused upon this occasion, and, should that be refused, His Most Christian Majesty would then be justified in taking a step which is otherwise premature and inconsistent with his moderation and that regard which he constantly professes, and no doubt entertains, for the peace of Europe. You will therefore represent in the most friendly manner to the French minister the unfavourable appearance which this must have at Constantinople, and having given the strongest assurance of the sincerity of His Majesty's friendship for His Most Christian Majesty, as also of his intention religiously to observe the laws of that neutrality which he has declared to the belligerent powers, and of his wishes to see a stop put to the calamities of war, you will add that, such being the laudable motives which engage His Majesty to enter into a friendly discussion of this matter, they entitle him to a return of the same open and unreserved explanation upon a measure of which his regard for the publick tranquillity will not permit him to be an indifferent spectator.

*(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 281.)*

St. James', 6 July 1770.

No. 18.

. . . . His Majesty was disappointed in not receiving a more satisfactory explanation with regard to the two frigates intended for the Archipelago at this conjuncture. As the surprize which the King felt upon the Duc de Choiseul's communicating to you such an intention was expressed with that friendly attention towards H.M.C.M. which His Majesty wishes to observe upon every occasion, it is hoped that the same anxiety for the publick peace and tranquillity which occasioned the representation you were ordered to make, will justify your renewing your application in the same friendly terms to the French minister on a subject which is not merely confined to what the two Crowns owe to themselves and to each other; the interest of humanity engage their attention on the present occasion, and it would be unfortunate if, thinking so much alike in that common cause, they should not effectually co-operate in its support, for want of a proper free communication of their sentiments. His Majesty therefore thinks it a duty to declare to His Most Christian Majesty his opinion that his extending his armament at Toulon beyond what is necessary for the expedition against Tunis, and his sending two ships into the Archipelago at the moment when the Russian and Turkish fleets are expected to meet in those narrow seas, is a measure which may retard and cannot promote the peace of Europe, at the same time that it is not well calculated to repair the particular losses which are the subject of complaint, or to procure that information with regard to those losses which is easily obtained without sending armed vessels. If the object is to prevent any future insult and to protect the French trade in those parts, His Majesty has certainly the same reasons for sending a force into the Archipelago, and nobody will say that such a step, taken at the same time by both Courts, promises well for the re-establishment of publick tranquillity . . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 281.)

ROCHFORD TO WALPOLE.

St. James', 22 September 1770.

No. 23.

. . . . . His Majesty is much pleased to find His Most Christian Majesty "approved the propositions which are to be made through Mr. Harris at Madrid, and thought them just and reasonable, "and that the Duc de Choiseul in his letter to the Marquis Grimaldi, "adopted the language and sentiments of Lord Weymouth's "dispatch on that occasion, of which, at that minister's request, "you gave him a translation, that he might the more easily communicate it to His Most Christian Majesty, in the very words "of that dispatch."

So strong a justification of His Majesty's conduct makes it unnecessary to make further professions of those pacifick sentiments which continue to guide his measures, even in the moment that his honor calls on him to be prepared for a possible refusal of that satisfaction for an injury received which he would much rather owe to His Catholick Majesty's justice than to other means. That object once obtained, upon terms which have been communicated to and approved by His Most Christian Majesty, His Majesty will disarm immediately, and those preparations will be suspended at which the Duc de Choiseul has, however, no reason to be surprized, because, before the orders for that purpose were given, he was told they could not, consistently with His Majesty's honor, be postponed. But untill the conditions of that satisfaction which has been so explicitly demanded, are realized, it is impossible to talk of disarmament. And as it depends entirely upon His Catholick Majesty to render those preparations productive of no interruption to the present peace, it is much to be wished that the armament here may not be accelerated by measures of the same kind taken in France, which will certainly be the case, if orders are given there for that purpose. At the same time that you communicate this to the Duc de Choiseul, in such terms as he cannot mistake, you will do it in such manner as cannot offend or indispose him towards a cool and amicable adjustment of this unfortunate affair, which His Majesty has most sincerely at heart. It is in order to avoid any thing that could tend to interrupt a cool and candid discussion of this matter that I shall make no further observa-



tions on what has passed between you and the Duc de Choiseul, but refer you to Lord Weymouth's letter to Mr. Harris, which contains propositions that the Court of Versailles approves, and from which His Majesty sees no reason to depart.

(*Ibid.*)

WEYMOUTH TO WALPOLE.

St. James', 17 October 1770.

No. 26.

The bad state of Prince Masseran's health which made it impossible for him to see me 'till Saturday, has prevented my writing to you sooner, as I thought it proper to wait 'till I could communicate to you the result of our interview, for which I refer you to the inclosed copy of my letter of this day's date to Mr. Harris, of which you are permitted to make that use you think most likely to promote the great object of those generous and humane sentiments from which His Majesty never departs, even when the honor of his Crown and the rights of his people call in so particular a manner for his attention.

The opportunity which is given to His Most Christian Majesty of carrying his powerful influence at Madrid in favor of this desirable object, puts the sincerity of His Majesty's wishes beyond the reach of suspicion; and tho' the inclosed letter to Mr. Harris affords a plain answer to some things which have passed between the Duc de Choiseul and you, and will confine you to the language you are to hold to him at the same time that it will shew you the necessity on my animadverting on the word *mediation* used by Mr. Francès, you may assure that minister that it was never intended to check His Most Christian Majesty's good offices at Madrid, where alone they may be employed with great propriety and to good purpose. And when I explained myself to the French minister on this head, and on the necessity of our treating directly with Spain and not through any other channel, it was with that perfect good humour which has been observed on both sides, through the whole of this affair, and which I hope will not be interrupted on our part. For however great the provocation, His Majesty's just resentment is not to be lowered by passion or disgraced by altercation. You will therefore continue to observe the same unreserved conduct to the Duc de Choiseul, and allow

that minister's pacifick sentiments, which have given great satisfaction here, to operate in their full extent where they can have a good effect, without your entering into any explanations with him upon the nature of the demand, so clearly and so candidly stated to Mr. Harris, which may retard, but cannot quicken or facilitate the satisfaction required.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 281.)

St. James', 25 October 1770.

No. 28.

I have received and laid before the King your dispatch by Coates, and I am extremely concerned to find from it that it becomes necessary to confine you to the instructions which I have already transmitted to you by the King's commands, from which you might so easily have collected that it would be highly improper to make any declaration to the Court of Versailles in an indirect manner through your channel, that I have avoided doing directly to the Court of Madrid through Prince Masseran or Mr. Harris. Had His Catholick Majesty declared his disavowal of the Governor of Buenos-Ayres, and that he would restore things to the precise situation in which they stood before the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, we should have been prepared for those discussions into which Prince Masseran has been expressly told by the King's order that it is impossible to enter without first knowing His Catholick Majesty's sentiments on that head. I own I am at a loss to see the difficulty "of destroying at Madrid all doubts or suspicions of an ambitious or equivocal conduct in His Majesty," if any such doubts or suspicions could possibly exist, considering the open and direct manner in which this affair has been treated; and least I should render matters intricate which are in themselves plain by entering any explanations in regard to some parts of your *very private* letter of the 21<sup>st</sup> inst., I shall refer you to the words of Lord Rochford's letter of the 22<sup>nd</sup> past where His Lordship says "that satisfaction for the injury . . . . talk of disarming."<sup>1</sup>

Agreable to the instructions which you have already received on this head, you are by no means to discourage the Duc de Choiseul from using his influence in the Spanish councils in the manner which he judges most likely to reconcile His Catholick Majesty to

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 114.

this moderate and reasonable satisfaction demanded in my letter of the 12th past to Mr. Harris. That letter contains propositions which the Court of Versailles has approved, and from which His Majesty sees no reason to depart. I shall only add on this head that if that influence has been properly exerted, I shall find the happy effects of it in my next conference with Prince Masseran with whom alone I can proceed to further discussion upon the mode which His Excellency shall be authorized to propose, for *realizing* the conditions of that satisfaction which has been so explicitly demanded . . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

ROCHFORD TO HARCOURT.

St. James', 21 December 1770.

No. 32.

It becomes now my task to answer Your Excellency's last letter of the 12 December no. 58 to Lord Weymouth, the contents of which gave me some surprize, for neither Lord Weymouth or myself know anything of that last proposal that the Duke of Choiseul mentioned to Your Excellency. Negotiation has long been at an end between us and the Court of Spain; Your Excellency must therefore see the great impropriety there would be in listening to any renewal of negotiation through the means of the French Court; at the same time it is a matter of indifference to the King, by what influence the Court of Spain acts, provided it acquiesces in the reasonable demand we first made, from which we have never departed nor ever can suffer the minutest alteration to be made to the substance of it. I thought it necessary to say thus much to Your Excellency for your information, that you might be upon your guard, and not be drawn in to treat with the Duke of Choiseul in any shape upon this business otherwise than by hearing what he says and reporting it to me for His Majesty's information.

It gave great satisfaction to the King to learn that by [*sic*] Your Excellency was determined to be guarded against the artful insinuations and professions of the French minister, and I agree entirely with you that very little credit is to be given to them. The very great military preparations they are making, and particularly the marching of such a considerable body of troops towards the sea coast, and to be commanded by the Duke of Choiseul's own brother

wears so very unfavourable an aspect, that if before we had been inclined to believe the sincerity of their professions, the Duke of Choiseul must think us overburthened with credulity not to imagine such conduct must destroy every degree of confidence. Your Excellency will continue therefore to be very attentive to what is going on, particularly in their ports, and I should hope in this critical situation to hear from you every post, if it is only a line, that I may be informed of the smallest alteration that may arise.

Your Excellency's information of the French treating with Genoua for the possession of the Gulph of Spezia is confirmed to us from other parts with the addition of their desiring to garrison the maritime towns of the Republick. I need not point out to Your Excellency the importance of getting every light that can be obtained on this subject which you may perhaps have an opportunity of doing by narrowly watching the motions of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Sorba who must probably have a share in this negociation.

The affairs of the French parliament grow more and more interesting, and it becomes the more necessary to be attentive to them, as any degree of confusion amongst themselves must embarrass them and perhaps make even an alteration in their political conduct.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 282.)

St. James', 2 January 1771.

No. 1.

. . . . Though we knew the Duke of Choiseul's credit to have received several blows, and your dispatch no. 60 had given us some reason to think that a crisis might be near, yet our having seen that minister for so long together baffle as to the main point the repeated attacks of his adversaries, made the late revolution in the Cabinet of Versailles come unexpected.

In the present state of things it is impossible to give Your Excellency any other instructions than what I am sure is needless to recommend to you, the observing the tone that is adopted by the new ministers, which the King will be glad to learn, accompanied with such reflections as occur to you.

I have no doubt but Your Excellency will be naturally led to give a particular attention to the manner in which the new administration may express themselves with respect to the engagements

of the Family Compact in our present dispute with the Court of Spain, in relation to which Madame Barré's friends have been represented to have declared a difference of sentiments from the Dukes of Choiseul and Praslin, who maintained the obligation of that compact. It will however be prudent for Your Excellency to avoid expressing any particular satisfaction on such declarations as may be made to you, since they are desirable to us in no other light than as (if made in the same manner at Madrid) they may oblige the Court of Spain from the want of the support of France to come into the terms demanded by His Majesty.

Your Excellency will at the same time hold the most uniform determined language on the impossibility of the King's making any proposal whatsoever or receiving any, but from His Catholick Majesty himself which shall fully come up to the just expectations of Great Britain . . . . .

*(Ibid.)*

St. James', 22 January 1771.

No. 5.

Your letter no. 66 by Potter was received on Wednesday last, and I have the pleasure to acquaint Your Excellency that the information contained in it has been verified by a declaration signed this day by Prince Masserano by which he declares that His Catholick Majesty disavows the expedition against Port Egmont and engages that His Catholick Majesty shall immediately restore to the King the port and fort of Port Egmont and it's dependencies with His Majesty's artillery, stores and effects as well as those of his subjects ; which declaration together with the full performance of the said engagement on the part of His Catholick Majesty, I have in His Majesty's name, accepted as a satisfaction for the injury done to the Crown of Great Britain.

Your Excellency will, I conclude, by this time have had some conversation with the Duke de La Vrillière or other of the French ministers whose general language, as well as that they may have holden on the particular subject of the Family Compact, it is very desirable to know. You will on all occasions assure them of His Majesty's invariable disposition to preserve the publick tranquillity, of which indeed he has now given the most convincing proof . . . . .



(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 282.)

St. James', 15 March 1771.

No. 12.

. . . . . As it is most probable that His Swedish Majesty will endeavor to engage the Most Christian King to make strong efforts in favour of the Court party in Sweden, in the approaching diet, and as the lengths which the Court of Versailles may think proper to go in this business may be a test how far a pacifick or a contrary system prevails there, I have His Majesty's commands to recommend to Your Excellency the closest attention to discover what engagements France is willing to enter into with regard to Sweden, and what she may be willing to advance to prepare matters for any new treaty with that kingdom.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 29 March 1771.

No. 13.

. . . . . The news of the Austrian troops marching out of Flanders has given great alarm in Holland on account of their barrier being left naked, and that alarm has been much increased by the suspicion of its being a step concerted with the Court of France and by the report of the towns in Flanders and particularly Newport and Ostend being to be garrisoned by French troops. Your Excellency will endeavour to discover whether there has really been any such concert, and whether it is intended to march any troops from France for the above purpose, which His Majesty could never look upon with indifference . . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 283.)

St. James', 12 July 1771.

No. 23.

. . . . . As there have been surmizes thrown out here that the supposed pretension of the Court of Russia to retain one or more islands of the Archipelago was probably with a design to make a present of them to Great Britain, Your Excellency will in your next conference with the Duke of Aiguillon, in case he should drop any thing of that kind, assure him that we entertain no idea of aggrandizing, or, I might rather say, weakening ourselves by making any acquisition in the Levant, and will endeavour to satisfy

him in general of the injustice done His Majesty by supposing him to give way to views of ambition in any part of the world.

(*Ibid.*)

ROCHFORD TO BLAQUIÈRE.

St. James', 27 October 1771.

No. 35.

. . . . . I come now to . . . . . the confidential language the Duke<sup>1</sup> held to you on the Spanish insinuations, and you judge very rightly in supposing such conversations cannot be meant for your private amusement, and have therefore acted very properly in giving immediate information of them. . . . . The King has certainly no views of making any other acquisitions, has given on every occasion the strongest proofs of it, but will not be interrupted in the quiet possession of those he has got. And as to Lord Sandwich's operations,<sup>2</sup> they could never be construed offensively warlike. The strength we meant to keep was fairly communicated, and surely we are responsible to nobody for our carrying it into execution after our own manner. If Lord Sandwich has done it with great ability, which he certainly has, it does him honour, but can give no umbrage except to those who wish to pick a quarrel, and are perhaps sorry to see us so unlikely to be off our guard.

The last and most essential thing the Duke d'Aiguillon said to you was : *Soyons d'accord* and let them do their worst, speaking of the Court of Spain. I entirely fall in with the Duke's idea under the present circumstances, and it will be only by acting sincerely *d'accord* that mischief can be prevented.

The King, as I have before said, is firmly resolved, and it is the unanimous opinion of his servants whom he chiefly consults, not to give the smallest reason of just complaint to the Court of Spain, and very lately has ordered his commanders of his ships of war to conform strictly to treaties subsisting between the two Crowns. The Court of Spain have even expressed their satisfaction at it. It gives therefore the more concern to see that they hold a double language, but even that it will only serve to put us more upon our guard not induce us to take any step that can give justifiable offence. I hope therefore when you convey these sentiments to

<sup>1</sup> d'Aiguillon.

<sup>2</sup> At the Admiralty.

the French minister, you will take care to represent to him how much the publick tranquillity will depend on his not listening to any ill-founded insinuations, and on his discouraging the Court of Spain from taking steps which it is presumed she will never venture to do unless the Court of France resolves to support her  
 . . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 283.*)

St. James', 27 December 1771.

No. 43.

I could not but be much surprized after what has already been said to him on that subject to find by your's no. 19 that the Duke of Aiguillon has again mentioned to you the pretended promise that we would abandon Falkland's Islands. In order to put an end to any such suggestion being reiterated to you, I must desire you to declare to that minister in my name, in the strongest and most positive terms, that I do not know of any such promise having been made directly or indirectly by any of His Majesty's ministers; that for my own part I should have considered it as dishonourable, and am persuaded it must have appeared in the same light to my colleagues; that therefore any future mention of it must be felt by us as injurious and intended only to shew an indisposition towards us and not with any expectation that it can be acknowledged or admitted on our part . . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 27 December 1771.

Most private.

I think I need not say how excessively surprized I was at the Duke d'Aiguillon's conduct with regard to Lord Shelburne, especially after the fair and proper warning you had given him, and your address in getting from the Duke how far he had gone has been thought extremely commendable. If the Duke thinks he has learnt from Lord Shelburne either his own sentiments or those of opposition, I believe he will find himself mistaken, and if ever the question should arise in Parliament about the propriety of evacuating Falkland Island, I can venture to prophecy the Duke must prepare himself for being surprized at finding Lord Shelburne hold a very different language in the House of Lords from what he held after a minister's dinner at the French Court. Perhaps

in renewing the topick with the Duke you will be able at some favourable opportunity to learn the whole extent of his confidence to Lord Shelburne, and particularly whether he went so far as to tell His Lordship the evacuation of the island had been promised

. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 284.)

ROCHFORD TO HARCOURT.

St. James', 14 February 1772.

No. 3.

Your Excellency's letters to the 7th inst. have been received and laid before the King.

The existence of the treaty of subsidy between Austria and the Porte is confirmed to us from every part, particularly from Constantinople. What appears new in the sketch of the conditions inclosed by Your Excellency is the desire of aggrandizement in the Court of Vienna by the acquisition of Belgrade and of Wallachia with part of Moldavia, which, it must be allowed, if true, gives a very bad grace to their violent opposition to the pretensions of the Court of St. Petersburg with regard to those provinces and even the Crimea. The only prospect that seems now to be left of a peace being brought about this winter is that of the Turks concluding it suddenly in a fit of despair without mediation, or that of the King of Prussia alone; as there can be no doubt that the Court of Vienna, and that of Versailles also (whose ambassador certainly acts at present in the greatest concert with the Imperial minister at Constantinople) will leave no stone unturned to dissuade the Porte from consenting to the terms of Russia. The designs of the King of Prussia on Poland are scarce to be questioned, but if the Czarina should succeed in disembarassing herself of this burthensome war, it seems problematical, notwithstanding the strong language that has been holden at Vienna on that subject, whether Austria will venture a war to prevent such an accession of strength to her rival, with the risk of the King of Prussia being supported by the Court of St. Petersburg, which there is reason to suspect at least connives with his views, though apparently contrary to the permanent interests of Russia. It will be very material for Your Excellency to learn what support France is likely to give to the Court of Vienna in case things should come to a rupture.

Nothing can be more interesting than the intelligence transmitted by Your Excellency concerning East India affairs. The resolution of throwing open that trade to private adventurers is a natural consequence of the failure of the plan for re-establishing the Company. I shall not fail to give our East India directors proper warning, that they may counteract the views of the French of being assisted in their trade by interested persons in our factories. Though the instructions given to Mr. Law and those you understand to be sent out to the Chev<sup>r</sup>. Tiernay promise us security from any great undertaking of the French in India, yet the opportunity of giving material assistance to the country powers who might be inclined to annoy us, and the strong temptation of getting their troops paid as subsidiaries, which they are scarce able to pay themselves, if one should attribute to them no farther political views, must make their motions an object of great attention as long as they have such a force in that part of the world as they have at present; and Your Excellency cannot be too full and particular in sending the informations you can collect relative to an object of such importance.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 284.)

St. James', 21 February 1772.

No. 4.

. . . . The language holden by Your Excellency to the Duke d'Aiguillon on the subject of the King of Prussia's designs against Dantzick and Polish Prussia, and the possession of the Crimea and navigation of the Black Sea being obtained by Russia, was extremely judicious. It is so far from clear that the latter event would be prejudicial to the interests of Great Britain, that the contrary is rather to be presumed, at the same time that it would probably be a great blow to the French Levant trade. As to the views of the King of Prussia, however, His Majesty may for the sake of the free commerce of his subjects wish that they should not take place; it is certainly not with France that he will concert measures to prevent them, and Your Excellency is well aware of the use that might be made at other Courts of any communication of our sentiments to that of Versailles on points of such delicacy. We do not yet learn whether the Court of St. Petersburg has any positive knowledge of the treaty of subsidy between Austria and the Porte, which it should seem must absolutely put an end to



the former having any share in the mediation. Your Excellency's success in having obtained a copy of that treaty has enabled us to give Lord Cathcart a particular information of what so nearly concerns the Court of Russia, in case they should not have received it earlier by another channel.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 13 March 1772.

Most private and secret.

. . . . I have by His Majesty's command communicated to Lord Grantham and to Mr. Walpole, the substance of Your Excellency's information concerning the treaty supposed to be in agitation between the Courts of France, Spain, and Portugal, but with the strictest caution not to let it be suspected from whence the intelligence was received.

The advices from Pondicherri are very alarming, as besides the general plan which seems to be adopted of making the East Indies their principal object, and considering it as the part where in case of a rupture we are the most vulnerable, the opportunity which they may think they see of ruining our affairs in that country may tempt the Court of France to act sooner than they would otherwise wish to do. Your Excellency will therefore take the first good opportunity to insinuate to the Duke d'Aiguillon that publick reports of their intending to encrease their force of men and ships in India have reached us, that we are not willing to believe them, but that I have permitted you to observe to him in confidence that such a step will necessarily induce England to do the same in her own defence, and besides the strongest assurances which you are at liberty to give him of our having no hostile intentions in that part of the world, you will endeavour to make him sensible that it would be absurd to ascribe them to us, as we can have no object of acquisition there at the expence of France, and indeed have nothing more to wish than to maintain our present possessions.

It may likewise not be improper for Your Excellency, if the occasion should offer, to hint to the Duke d'Aiguillon that we are not likely to see with indifference his Court taking any part in the Mediterranean against the Russians, and that any more French ships of force going towards the Archipelago than are necessary for the protection of their commerce must give cause of suspicion.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 284.*)

St. James', 10 April 1772.

No. 11.

. . . . . I inclose to Your Excellency copy of a letter sent to me by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mello in confirmation of what he had before declared to me relative to the supposed treaty of commerce between France and Portugal. He added to me in conversation that if I could learn for certain through Your Excellency that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Souza had, in order to ingratiate himself at Versailles, officiously made overtures for a treaty, he would engage to have that minister recalled, and therefore I must desire Your Excellency to acquaint me with whatever you can discover on this head. How far Portugal is sincere, time must shew ; in the meanwhile I can only acquaint you that Mr. Walpole in a letter just received expresses his opinion that the nomination of ambassadors with which he could not but be somewhat struck, has no particular view, and that the Court of Lisbon are in earnest disposed to enforce their prohibition of French woollen goods. . . . .

(*Ibid., no. 285.*)

St. James', 3 July 1772.

No. 18.

. . . . . We hear from Poland that the King of Prussia's intention of possessing himself of Polish Prussia has been declared to the King of Poland's assessor at Marienbourg, and in consequence of it the Polish ministry have delivered a note to the foreign ministers praying the interposition of their respective Courts to prevent the dismemberment of their Republick. The Russian Ambassador at Warsaw continues still to treat it as a thing not concerted with his Court, as disagreeable to Russia, and which at the most she finds herself in a situation not to be able to oppose.

The pretensions of Austria in the partition of Poland are, as we are informed, much greater than has been imagined or than perhaps they themselves originally intended, and, as we are told, they certainly mean to begin by taking possession of the city of Cracow, which the Russians have orders to evacuate, and claim a right not only to that city, but to a great part of Little Poland.

[Despatches from Rochford to Blaquièrè dated 14 and 29 August

1772 will be found in George Grey Butler, *Colonel St. Paul of Ewart*, London, 1911, Vol. I, pp. 2 and 14.]

(*Ibid.*, no. 286.)

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SUFFOLK, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO  
BLAQUIÈRE.

St. James', 4 September 1772.

No. 14.

As you may not have heard of the extraordinary occurrences in Sweden, I think proper in Lord Rochford's absence to inclose to you copies of the first accounts which have been received here of them.

His Majesty has not yet heard any particulars from Sir John Goodricke, whose advices are expected with impatience. An attempt to change the constitution of Sweden and thereby to throw that country into an absolute dependance upon France cannot be regarded with indifference by the rest of Europe. It is particularly interesting to the northern powers, and His Majesty, who is uniform in his wishes to procure the general tranquility by forming such alliances as may conduce to that purpose, is anxiously intent to see defeated these designs upon a country which may so essentially contribute to his plan.

Whatever relates to the transaction in Sweden is more than ordinarily interesting, and you will not fail to inform me of all you hear upon the subject and to observe the effect it has at the Court where you reside and the manner in which the Imperial and Spanish ministers conduct themselves upon it.

[Despatches from Rochford to Blaquière dated 11 and 18 September 1772 will be found printed in G. G. Butler, *St. Paul, ut sup.*, Vol. I, pp. 7 and 13.]

## DAVID MURRAY, 7th VISCOUNT STORMONT 1772-1778

THE nephew and heir of Lord Mansfield was the ablest of the ambassadors sent to France between the Peace of Paris and the outbreak of the war of the American revolution. He was transferred from Vienna, where he had done excellent work, at a time of grave uncertainty for European peace and for friendly relations between Britain and France, when the main security for peace seemed to lie in the disposition of Louis XV. The home ministry seem to have attached great importance to his opinions, for some of their despatches to other Courts are nothing but repetitions of Stormont's observations from Paris; hence it is not a little curious that, though their importance and interest (especially in the first months of Louis XVI's reign) was pointed out by J. Flammermont nearly forty years ago (*Correspondances des agents diplomatiques étrangers en France*, Paris, 1896, pp. 502-3), they should still remain in manuscript obscurity in the Record Office.

He remained at his post better than his predecessor, but there were wide gaps. It was not until April 1773 that he was able definitely to take over, and he was absent from Paris from the end of June of the same year till December, and in the summer of 1775 and again in 1776. Before his arrival and during his absences he had as *Chargé d'affaires* Colonel HORACE ST. PAUL, who had gained the dignity of Count of the Holy Roman Empire by his services in the Austrian Army during the Seven Years' War—an efficient substitute who generally took a more pessimistic view of the designs of the French than did his chief. An account of his life is in George Grey Butler, *Colonel St. Paul of Ewart*, London, 1911, 2 vols., where all St. Paul's diplomatic papers during his

residence in Paris are fully printed from the originals preserved at Ewart Park in Northumberland. To these reference may here be made for the despatches sent to St. Paul as *chargé d'affaires* during Stormont's absences in 1772, 1773, 1775 and 1776. Two despatches to Stormont himself dated 7 April 1773 and 4 June 1773 will also be found in these volumes. St. Paul left Paris early in 1777 on being nominated to Stockholm, a post which for financial reasons he was unable to take up. His place in Paris was taken by WILLIAM FULLARTON.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 286.*)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAVID VISCOUNT STORMONT, K.T.,  
P.C., APPOINTED AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENI-  
POTENTIARY TO THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 10 December 1772.

[Formal.]

(*Ibid.*)

SEPARATE AND PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAVID, VISCOUNT  
STORMONT.

St. James', 10 December 1772.

1. We have ordered to be delivered to you herewith for your information copies of . . . .<sup>1</sup>

2. As the alliance contracted between the Empress Queen of Hungary and the Most Christian King was the cause of both extending and protracting the last war and was justly apprehended to be dangerous to the liberties of Europe, you shall employ your utmost diligence to discover upon what footing those Courts may at present be; whether they continue to keep up the same good understanding; what new engagements they may have entered into since the war; or what they may be preparing to contract on occasion of the Dauphin's marriage with the Archduchess or otherwise; or on the other hand, whether there may be some real coolness at present between them capable of producing any serious consequences, either from the late union of measures pursued by the Court of Vienna with those of Petersburg and Berlin, or from the attempts which it is thought have been made by France towards prolonging the war between Russia and the Porte.

<sup>1</sup> As in Hertford's separate instructions.



3. We shall expect to receive constant information . . . . a dangerous tendency.<sup>1</sup> And the necessity of your attention to such an essential object of Our concern is greatly increased by the continuance of the most intimate and close connexion which subsists still in the fullest force between the two Courts of France and Spain.

4. We have given instructions . . . . .

5. That you may have a more perfect understanding . . . . . extent of the Family Compact <sup>2</sup> and in a most particular manner recommending to you to keep a watchful eye whether France may have already joined or shall hereafter join with Spain in attempting to negotiate any treaty of commerce or alliance with Portugal, or in failure thereof, how far they may in concert together form any ambitious views in respect to the dominions of Portugal either in Europe or America.

6. The late revolution in Sweden and the actual apparent union of the Courts of Vienna, Petersburgh and Berlin on account of their respective new acquisitions of so great a part of the dominions of Poland are objects of such great importance, and may be productive of such extensive consequences that you cannot be too anxious in penetrating into the real views and systems of France relative to the affairs of Europe in general at this juncture, or to any of the northern Courts in particular, and also in discovering, if possible, what further use France may attempt to make of the late revolution in Sweden, either with regard to the renewal of former subsidiary treaties with Denmark or to the contracting new commercial alliances, engagements, &c. with any of the other powers of the north, and especially with the Empress of Russia, which at present appears to be one of the objects of the French Court by the late mission of the new French minister to Petersburgh. And you will also inform Us of the part which France may take in respect to the affairs of the German Empire, and particularly what may concern the interests of the Protestant religion.

7. You will privately make enquiries concerning the present place of concealment of the Pretender . . . . . information thereof, and particularly if you can discover . . . . . contribute thereto; but as this person's . . . . .<sup>3</sup>

8. You shall procure the best accounts . . . . . deserve Our notice.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As in Richmond's separate instructions.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> See Richmond's separate instructions.

9. With regard to all particular heads . . . . necessary for your information. You will have seen by the 13<sup>th</sup> article of the definitive treaty of Paris what is stipulated relative to the town and port of Dunkirk. We have constantly insisted on the demolition not only of the jettées . . . . upon their health.<sup>1</sup> For some time past there has been no occasion of new discussions on this material object, but as Our engineer residing constantly at Dunkirk will have Our commands to inform you of everything . . . . .<sup>2</sup>

10. As we have reason to believe that a principal object of the attention of France will be to endeavour to recover their almost lost trade in the East Indies, or at least to make the possessions of the East India Company as uneasy and as unserviceable to them as possible, you shall make the strictest inquiry about the plans that have been already or shall be laid down and the measure intended to be pursued in the conduct and management of the French interests in the East Indies, and you shall procure all possible information in regard to which of the Indian Princes there they may chiefly attempt to form a more close connection for the more probable execution of their future designs. The great number of regular troops maintained by the French in the Islands of France and Bourbon, so much more considerable than can be wanted for their defence even in time of war, and their continuing to send from time to time a greater force, are strong indications of their ambitious designs. This therefore will render still more necessary your vigilance in your constant enquiries of what may pass in the French ports relative to so capital an object.

11. You will understand by the papers to be communicated to you by the East India Company's agent at Paris<sup>3</sup> what steps have been taken in their just claim upon the Crown of France for the very great sums expended by them upon the maintenance of French prisoners during the last war, which has hitherto been deferred from time to time upon pretence of the difficulties which have occurred in settling the accounts ; and as this demand remains hitherto unsatisfied, you are to press very earnestly the French ministers for a final conclusion of this business.

12. As a great number of the inhabitants . . . . .<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Richmond's separate instructions.

<sup>2</sup> See Hertford's separate instructions.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Chamier.

13. You are to discover what may be the designs of the French Court with regard to the fishery at Newfoundland . . . . .<sup>1</sup>

14. You will in general be extremely attentive in making yourself master . . . . .<sup>2</sup>

15. Upon all the foregoing heads . . . . .<sup>3</sup>

(*P.R.O., S.P.* 78, *no.* 287.)

SUFFOLK TO STORMONT.

St. James', 14 April 1773.

No. 5.

. . . . . What you said, my Lord, to that minister<sup>4</sup> with regard to the appearance of so formidable a French fleet at such a conjuncture as the present in the Mediterranean is entirely conformable to His Majesty's sentiments and intentions. The same principles of general policy and national honour which prevent the King from being indifferent to a French fleet in the Baltick operate as strongly with regard to other seas, and the risks which the country would run in such a case in the most valuable considerations of interest and reputation are too great for it ever to shew the most distant acquiescence in this respect. Your Excellency must be too well convinced of this from all that has passed, as well as from your own knowledge and reflections, for me to say more upon the subject. It remains therefore that I should refer Your Excellency to Lord Rochford's last dispatch wherein you will have received His Majesty's positive orders to declare to the Duke d'Aiguillon that the determination whether immediately to arm or not depends upon the answer he will authorize Your Excellency to transmit without delay and that his silence will justify our preparations. This declaration, I conclude, Your Excellency will have made before you receive this, with that politeness which is inseparable from you and with that firmness which the case requires. I am inclined to flatter myself that it will have the proposed effect, and that the French minister, when convinced of the King's unalterable determination will avoid taking those measures which must be productive of the most unhappy consequences. If however the Court of Versailles perseveres in its naval equipment, and Your

<sup>1</sup> See Hertford's separate instructions, except that for "an *abri*" is substituted "a shelter."

<sup>2</sup> As in Albemarle's private instructions.

<sup>3</sup> As in Richmond's separate instructions.

<sup>4</sup> Aiguillon.

Excellency has not already received full and positive assurances that it has ceased to do so, it is the King's pleasure that you deliver without loss of time the inclosed memorial <sup>1</sup> to the Duke d'Aiguillon that a testimony may remain of His Majesty's pacifick disposition and open conduct by thus forewarning the French Court in time and in the most friendly though solemn manner, of what in certain contingencys he means to do. If, according to these instructions, Your Excellency finds it necessary to deliver this memorial, you will do it in a manner expressive of the concern His Majesty feels to be under such a necessity, and decisive as to the firmness with which His Majesty will persevere in a determination which is too closely connected with the honour of his Crown and the interests of his people for him ever to deviate from. Your Excellency will be very attentive to the effect which this memorial will have upon the Duke d'Aiguillon immediately on your presenting it and afterwards. You will press for an answer without delay, and the preparatory measures which this answer, if it is not satisfactory and such as may be relied on, will render inevitable, will be taken instantly on the receipt of it.

Your Excellency will do well to urge to the Duke d'Aiguillon

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum was suggested by Stormont as a means of informing Louis XV of the true state of affairs, as there was only too much reason to believe that d'Aiguillon suppressed much of what passed between himself and foreign envoys in conversation (Stormont to Rochford, Paris, 7 April 1773, most secret):

La Cour de Londres, animée du désir le plus sincère de maintenir la tranquillité générale et de conserver l'heureuse harmonie qui subsiste entre elle et la Cour de France, et croyant en même tems donner une preuve non équivoque de son amitié, en indiquant de bonne heure tout ce qui peut conduire à la moindre mésintelligence entre les deux Cours, a déjà représenté plusieurs fois dans les termes les plus clairs et les plus amiables, tous les inconvénients qui pourroient résulter de tout armement naval que la France jugeroit à propos de faire dans l'état de crise où se trouvent actuellement les affaires de l'Europe. C'est dans le même sentiment, et par le même principe que le Roi de la Grande Bretagne ordonne à son ambassadeur de réitérer les mêmes représentations amiables, mais de déclarer en même tems que, si Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne persiste dans l'intention de faire des armements navals, soit à Toulon, soit ailleurs, Sa Majesté Britannique se trouvera dans la nécessité d'en ordonner de semblables.

Le Roi, qui a vu avec le plaisir le plus sensible les sentimens de S.M.T.C. correspondre jusqu'à présent avec les siens pour la conservation de la paix, ne peut qu'envisager avec regret toute circonstance qui pourroit la mettre en danger. En tout cas, S.M. aura au moins la consolation de n'y avoir pas donné occasion et d'avoir déclaré à tems ses inquiétudes et ses résolutions.

that nothing but His Majesty's uniform dispositions to go all becoming lengths to preserve the general tranquillity and to avoid without the greatest necessity taking any steps that might give encouragement to other powers to disturb it could have prevented His Majesty from having already begun to prepare for the emergency which is likely to happen. He can no longer delay this indispensable and necessary work if Your Excellency's answer to this dispatch calls for it ; and it will call for it, if you are not able to transmit a full, clear, positive, written assurance from the Court of France in return to your memorial, that they will desist from their naval preparations and their intentions to send a fleet into the Baltick or Mediterranean Sea. In the course of this dispatch, I have not thought it worth while to take any notice of the Duke d'Aiguillon's expression that the Toulon fleet *sera une flotte d'évolutions comme nous eu avons eu l'année passée* ; the time, the occasion and the situation of things in general as well as the kind of fleet in preparation are all very different to what they were last year, and the Duke d'Aiguillon undervalues himself and Your Excellency extremely by holding such a language to you on such an occasion. I have but one word more to add. If the Duke d'Aiguillon persists in forcing us to unbend the British sails, let him do it with his eyes open, let him see and be aware of the very serious consequences which will all lay at his door. I mean not that Your Excellency should assume a threatening stile or deviate in the least from that fair, direct, and manly manner in which Your Excellency has hitherto with the utmost propriety executed your instructions, but it is not right that the Duke d'Aiguillon should deceive himself by imagining that a British fleet when once out in such a crisis as this is, can parade about the seas doing nothing, and that His Majesty can long continue without taking a decisive part. There is another circumstance which I believe has been and I think ought to be again enforced to the Duke d'Aiguillon : I mean the obvious consequence of any bustle in our ports. There may be powers who perhaps are restrained from engaging in measures subversive of peace from an uncertainty of what the Court of London would do ; if the Duke d'Aiguillon forces us to make that publickly known, he may depend upon it, he will occasion the very evil he most fears and most wishes to avoid. I have received a letter from Mr. Gunning to-day of the 19th March, but he does not say a syllable in it, nor has he made mention in his preceding letters



for some time back of any fresh preparations at the Court of Petersburg either by sea or land; and he gives it as his opinion that the King of Sweden will not be attacked by Russia during the course of this year, even though the peace with the Porte should be made. I confess myself unable to reconcile this account with that which is transmitted by Mo<sup>r</sup>. Durand.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 288.)

ROCHFORD TO STORMONT.

St. James', 20 April 1773.

No. 7.

I came today from St. Osyth and assisted at a council tonight which is just over,<sup>1</sup> and I would not let a moment's time slip without informing Your Excellency that your advice has been exactly followed. Fifteen ships of the line are immediately ordered to be fitted out, and a proportionable number of frigates. This you may declare to the Duke d'Aiguillon and add it is in consequence of his declaration to Your Excellency of their arming out a fleet at Toulon.<sup>1</sup>

I have not now time to add any more but by the next post Your Excellency shall hear more fully from me.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 7 May 1773.

No. 11.

. . . . The assurances given you by the Duke d'Aiguillon in your last conference with him at his own house are as positive and explicit as can be expected for what regards the suspension of the armament at Toulon, and therefore His Majesty (who as Your Excellency well knows had no other motive for arming here) has judged proper to give without delay the necessary orders to the Lords of the Admiralty for the reduction of his naval forces and marines to the peace establishment and to the state in which they were previous to the 21st last month. I had yesterday the King's commands for signifying his pleasure thereon, and the same expedition will be used in executing these orders for the reduction as was employed in the preparations for arming, which were carried on with such extraordinary activity that the whole fleet destined

<sup>1</sup> Cypher.

for foreign service, if the occasion had required it, would be at this instant entirely ready to sail. There has been and still continues such a flowing in of sailors from all parts that there was no occasion to press. These circumstances I mention to Your Excellency as I know they must please you: I am persuaded they will be fully known by the French Court, and it is hoped will cause the proper impression without our appearing to publish them with any ostentation. . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 291.)

St. James', 11 January 1774.

No. 2.

. . . . . If Your Excellency shall find out by your conversation with other foreign ministers at the Court where you reside, that the French minister has hinted a closer connection between us than really exists, you will do well unaffectedly to contradict it, that such ministers may not inadvertently mislead their respective Courts.

Since Your Excellency's departure I have learnt that if the Turks should in the present war gain any advantage on the Danube, the Emperor would avail himself of the pretext of protecting his own dominions and joining with the Russians. I do not think this very likely, but the French affect to believe it, and I am persuaded you will not omit your endeavours to find out how far their suspicions are pretended or real. This investigation becomes the more important as it is essentially necessary to know on what terms the Courts of Vienna and France are.

I shall observe likewise to Your Excellency that it behoves us much to know the sentiments of the Court of France relative to the insurrection in the provinces of Oremburg, which you must have heard of, and which, if it is as serious as represented, will certainly incline them to drop any overtures they are supposed to have made to the Court of Petersburg, for I believe they are not quixotical enough to solicit the protecting of friends in adversity.

Just as I had finished this letter, intelligence which is come through a pretty good channel, has been received, and is as follows:—that the Courts of Vienna and Berlin mean to propose to the Czarina to exclude every possible interference of France in the Turkish mediation, and in order to engage the Czarina to listen

to them, that they will, if she requires it, hold such language at the Porte as must compel the Turks to accept of reasonable terms of peace. If the Court where you reside should discover this, I should imagine you will easily perceive it by the stile in which they now talk of their good ally the Empress Queen.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 18 February 1774.

Private.

I chuse to confine to a private letter the subject that this treats of, for though of a publick nature, a great deal of prudence and discretion is required in the management of it. I am informed by Mr. Murray that strong overtures have been made to him by the Kislar Aga to sound whether the King would undertake the mediation between Russia and the Porte, and it has been hinted to us from another quarter that France, finding her offer of mediation was not likely to be accepted by Russia, had artfully put the Porte on this scheme, well knowing that if we caught hold of the bait, we should not only be embarassed, but should in the conclusion of it infallibly disoblige one or the other party concerned and interested in it. Your Lordship will therefore easily imagine that this will be well and maturely considered before any step is taken in it one way or the other, and if from the knowledge you now have of the stage of it, you can get any information that may tend to throw a light upon it, you will give an additional proof of your zeal and diligence, of both which the King is already perfectly satisfied. If the Duke d'Aiguillon should ever talk on this subject, I am persuaded your penetration will lead you to give perhaps not a bad guess from what he may inadvertently let drop on the occasion, and I do not think it is unlikely, if he is at the bottom of this scheme, but that he may affectedly throw out that they had not the least thought of interfering in the mediation, as they were persuaded Russia would never give her consent to it, in order to see the sort of language you will hold. In such a case I should pay Your Lordship but a bad compliment to suppose you would not be a gainer by the trial.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 291.)

St. James', 18 March 1774.

No. 12. Secret and confidential.

. . . . . We have for some time been acquainted with the King of Sweden's intention of making a visit to the Empress of Russia. It is now confirmed from several quarters, with this additional circumstance, that though his journey is not opposed by the Court of France, yet it is thought that it does not meet with their entire approbation.

Your Excellency cannot be too attentive to every particular relative to the intimate connection subsisting between France and Sweden, as the report is again strongly revived that they have signed some secret convention, though we have not yet been able to discover any particulars of it. The great anxiety shewn on all occasions by the French ministry for the support of Sweden, and the pressing instances which we are told are continually making by the French Ambassador at Stockholm for putting the Swedish Navy in order and compleating their land forces, can scarce be considered to arise from motives of mere friendship and affection. It rather gives room to suspect that France may have deeper designs, and may propose, when the opportunity offers, to make a further use of Sweden for the better carrying her own views into execution. This idea is still more confirmed by an intelligence we have lately received of what is said to have passed not long ago between the Courts of Vienna and France. I communicate it to Your Excellency for your own information alone, and with the sole view of assisting you to make further enquiries, but I depend on your usual discretion that it may not be known you are in possession of such informations.

We are assured that the Court of Vienna has pressed the French ministry to unite with them to bring about a peace between Russia and the Porte, and among other arguments to enforce the wisdom and policy of such a measure, they have represented that if the war continues, it must be expected that Russia will redouble her efforts next campaign, and should she gain any new considerable successes, she might force the Porte to purchase peace by means of immense treasures, and be enabled thereby to attack Sweden with greater advantage, whereas Russia in her present situation could not consider herself entitled to such favorable terms, and in her actual

exhausted state, if peace was now to be concluded, it is not probable she would think of attacking Sweden and risk thereby a new war. To this declaration we are told they answered that it was very indifferent to France whether the Porte should lose a little more or less, but of the highest importance to support Sweden and to protract the war in order to gain another year, that Sweden might be put in a full state of defence, and during that interval the finances and troops in France would also be regulated in such a manner as to enable her to support her ally, and if necessary repel force by force. If however the Court of Vienna would concur with France in measures for assisting Sweden in case of her being attacked by Russia, the French ministry would then join with that of Vienna in attempting to put an end to the war, and leave to the latter the honour of the mediation; but if the Court of Vienna refused to enter into such an engagement about Sweden, France would openly employ her whole credit at the Porte for continuing the war, and her endeavours for that purpose would perhaps not be ineffectual.

I am also assured that the Imperial Ambassador at Madrid has held much the same language to the Spanish ministry, but what their answer may have been, I have not yet learnt . . . . .

Our contest with America becomes very serious, and is a principal object of our attention. I cannot avoid mentioning to Your Excellency that Mr. Garnier affects on all occasions to express how desirous his Court is to see an end to those disturbances, but we are far from thinking they are sincere in those assertions. Your Excellency is already so sensible how necessary it is to give your utmost attention to this business that I have never any need to press either your zeal or your activity.

(*Ibid.*, no. 292.)

St. James', 13 May 1774.

No. 25.

In the midst of the hurry occasioned by the constant attendance in the House of Lords this week, I have not time to write to Your Lordship so fully as I could wish, but I hope soon to have a little leisure to turn my thoughts to the new and very interesting scene likely to happen at the Court where you reside. The character of the new King will be the first object worth Your Lordship's attending to, particularly his disposition to war or peace, his inclination



or dislike to our Court, but from what I have heard I much fear the latter sentiment prevails. The next object is the minister he employs, and principally those in whom he places his chiefest confidence, or whether he places his whole confidence in anyone, how far the Queen will be likely to have any influence, if so, by whom she will be probably governed. All these things Your Lordship I am sure sees the necessity of our being well acquainted with, and as I am desirous to give you every assistant intelligence I can, I will acquaint you with some anecdotes that are very lately come to my knowledge, and by a way that I have generally found not erroneous. You will make all the use of them necessary for your guidance, but taking particular care it is not discovered you receive the intelligence from home. Many parts of them are almost incredible, but other parts of them are not unlikely, and the truth of them must soon be cleared up. Such as who will be at first the nominal ministers, my information is that three are talked of for the department of foreign affairs, Cardinal Bernis, the Duke de Nivernois and the Archbishop of Toulouse, that the Chancellor and Bertin are to remain, and that these two it is believed possess the Dauphin's confidence. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Muy is talked of for the war, and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Clunier for the marine. Thus much with regard to the ministers : the next part of the intelligence is of a much more serious nature, and deserves to be investigated with the most nice and carefull attention. The Dauphin it is said began during the King's illness to shew a very arbitrary disposition to hold Councils, and speak his sentiments very freely and highly ; that his aversion to us has arisen from the disgracefull light we made the French Court appear in these last four years, and from a wish he has expressed to retrieve the disgraces of the last war ; what seems the incredible part of this story is that it is *asserted* that had the French King not been taken ill, it was a plan determined on to begin with us in July, when their Newfoundland seamen return home ; that it was determined to make every sacrifice that should be required by Prussia and Russia to break off all connection with the Court of Vienna, and in short renew the old system ; it is further supposed that this scheme may be deferred, but that it will not be long before it is revived. Strange as this is, if it be true, the Duke d'Aiguillon must have been the falsest, and I may add the weakest man upon earth, for nothing was so likely to ruin him as any war at all, and an unsuccessful one would have been fatal to him.

In order to have no reserve with Your Lordship, I must acquaint you that the Dauphin is supposed to have the greatest turn to economy, that he wishes for a diminution of the taxes, and in order to bring that about, he will come into the proposal of paying off their great load of debt by a sponge.

I have now with unreserve communicated to you in this confidential manner all my intelligence ; it may help you to unravel some things which may appear mysterious to you, and I have not the least doubt from your zeal and experience but that you will before it is long, let us know to what we, and, I may add, Europe, has [*sic*] to trust.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 292.)

St. James', 10 June 1774.

No. 29.

. . . . . The Duke d'Aiguillon's resignation opens a new scene at the French Court, and apart from the regard I had for him, I cannot but lament the loss of a minister whose pacifick disposition we have for some time past had very strong proofs of. The nomination of his successor for the foreign department is of such a serious consequence that you will easily conclude we must be anxious to know who will be made choice of for that post. I should wish it may be the Duke de Nivernois. If either Count Broglio, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Chatelet or Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Breteuil should be called forth, I shall be apprehensive that their extensive intriguing dispositions would not leave Europe long in peace. All accounts agree that the Chev<sup>r</sup>. de Muy will probably have the war department, and as his connection with the Broglios is known, it will well deserve Your Excellency's attention to discover what influence that family may have over him. I am sure I need not point out to you how essential it is that you find out as early as possible whether the French King's disposition is really pacifick or not, for let who will be minister, their profession will be all alike friendly, and the stronger those professions are, the more I shall doubt them ; but the French King's own disposition will in my opinion be the touchstone. A warlike one is absolutely incompatible with his oeconomic turn, but sanguine hopes of success may get the better of that principle. . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P.* 78, *no.* 292.)

St. James', 17 June 1774.

No. 30.

. . . . . From the knowledge we have of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes we consider him as a man of business integrity and of no enterprising disposition. Whether such a character will tend to keep him long in the department he is destined, time will discover, but in the present situation of affairs, it is thought here that he will be more disposed to the continuance of peace and more likely to carry on an amicable correspondence with us than any of the others who were talked of for that employment. I shall however suspend forming as yet any judgment of what will be the conduct of the French Court till I see them a little more settled. When they remove to Fontainebleau I think you will be able to guess in part by the travail of the French ministers there, what schemes they have in view, for Your Excellency knows 'tis about that time they fix all their operations with regard to their finances, which answers to the opening of the budget here. You will therefore without doubt be very attentive at that period.

The recall of the Duke of Choiseul may be a natural consequence of the beginning of a new reign. It does not occasion any alarm here, while he is not likely to take any share in the administration, but as his character is so well known to Your Excellency, I am persuaded it would have been one of the objects of your attention to have watched his motions, had he remained at Paris, which I am glad to find by your letter of the 13th this moment arrived, is not likely to happen. If the favour he has obtained may have been brought about by Her Most Christian Majesty, it shews that the Court of Vienna has the influence which was at first suspected, for which reason the King considers it essentially necessary that Your Excellency should keep up a constant confidential correspondence with Sir Robert Murray Keith at Vienna, which cannot but be productive, especially at this period, of the best effects for the good of the service.

His Majesty will be extremely anxious to learn continually from Your Excellency the progress of the inoculation of the Most Christian King, his two brothers and the Countess d'Artois, and will feel the highest joy and satisfaction in knowing the happy termination of it.

*(Ibid., no. 293.)*

St. James', 5 August 1774.

No. 39. Secret and private.

I have the King's permission to communicate to Your Excellency in the greatest confidence and for your own private information the following intelligence: that Prince Rohan in a conference he had with the Empress Queen a little before his departure from Vienna, took an opportunity of sounding her with regard to her sentiments towards his Court, insinuating to her the necessity of their joint union and the utility of their making a common cause with France for the benefit of Sweden; that the Empress gave no positive answer to this representation, but expressed herself only in general terms, that her future resolutions would depend upon circumstances and events.

I am informed also that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Bertin has represented to the Prussian minister at the Court where Your Excellency resides the necessity of taking care of Sweden as soon as Russia may be disengaged from her war with the Porte, and has endeavoured to convince him that the King of Prussia could not give a stronger test of his wishes for the continuation of peace, than if he would guaranty Sweden against the attacks of Russia.

My intelligencer adds that the Prussian minister approved of the expedient, and promised to represent it to his master, as likewise that the same proposition having been made to Count Mercy by Mo<sup>r</sup>. Bertin, he endeavoured at first to turn it off by insinuating that Russia would be so much exhausted by the present war, that one might rest assured that she would not think of disturbing Sweden, but upon Mo<sup>r</sup>. Bertin's observing that in politicks one ought not to be guided by conjectures, but go upon surer grounds, and his repeating afterwards his proposal for the Court of Vienna to guarantee Sweden in the same manner as had been mentioned to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Goltz, the Imperial minister undertook at length to represent it to his Court in a favourable light, and as the best expedient for insuring the future tranquillity of the north.

This scheme, however plausible, I think will probably not be attended with success, but it shews at least that France continues to interest herself much in the welfare of Sweden, and leaves no stone unturned in her favour. . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 293.*)

St. James', 26 August 1774.

No. 45. Secret and confidential.

. . . . . The event of the late peace<sup>1</sup> is so recent that we cannot yet pretend to form a judgment on the consequences of it, and of the different sensations it may produce at the Courts of Vienna and Berlin. The sentiments of the French ministry on this occasion appear very clear, and though the variety of resolutions in the young Court, so fully proved by all your dispatches, prevents us from forming any solid notions of their views in general with regard to the Courts of Vienna and Berlin, yet their support of Sweden and their union with Spain seem to be the foundation of their systems, and that the views of their past and present ministry tend to those pursuits, and it is apparent they are most horribly disappointed with the Turkish peace. Their concern for Sweden is the first object of their thoughts, and if sincere, is rather a proof that they do not mean for the present to act offensively, and only to defend their ally if attacked by Russia, of which however it is not natural to suppose any immediate intention on the part of the latter, which power was on the brink of ruin and destruction had not the peace been so fortunately effected, and it must now seriously attend to the quieting their interior commotions which are considered to be of the most alarming nature and it is thought that it may yet require a considerable time to restore a perfect tranquility in that country.

If the Court of Spain should have such deep views as Your Excellency alludes to with regard to their pretensions in case of a failure of the French Royal family, and therefore consider it necessary to support by means of the Chancellor, the present parliament against the old one, the union of the Bourbon family may possibly be of no long duration, for though Count d'Aranda with his machinating disposition might have that point in view, I cannot easily be inclined to think that either the Catholick King or his ministers would openly avow that they entertain such notions as the publicity thereof would to all intents and purposes overset their designs; and yet it is rather extraordinary that the present French King has not yet renewed either the Family Compact or his other engagements with the Court of Spain, which conduct has

<sup>1</sup> Kutchuk-Kainardji.



been animadverted upon by many of the ministers of the neighbouring powers. But let who will be the leading ministers in France and Spain, one would think it is of so much consequence to them to keep up a confidential communication, that it is not credible that Spain could conceal from France their situation with regard to Portugal and their designs against the latter in America. This notion is entirely confirmed by a conversation Lord Grantham mentions in his letter to me of the 1st inst. to have had with the French Ambassador at Madrid, by which the latter shewed that he was thoroughly acquainted with the state of those affairs, but held much the same language as Count Vergennes did to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Sousa, by considering them as trifling and likely to be terminated in America, taking great pains to enforce to Lord Grantham that the armaments at Cadiz were not destined to South America, and only to relieve the Spanish forces at Vera Cruz and the Havana. It is therefore very natural to concur with Your Excellency's reasoning that the ridiculous affected ignorance of the Court of France on this occasion tends to convey an idea of some bad designs and of suspecting a concerted plan between those two Courts. I expect to receive soon Mr. Walpole's answer to my letter of the 2<sup>d</sup> inst. . . . . and when it comes we shall probably be able to see more clear into these matters, for Mr. Walpole's last dispatches are not of sufficient importance to trouble you with them; but by the inclosed paper delivered to me yesterday by Mo<sup>r</sup>. Pinto, copy of which I confidentially communicate to Your Excellency, you will see that they are determined to act with vigour against Spain, and will only call upon us, if I understand them right, when they are driven to the last extremity.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 14 October 1774.

No. 53.

. . . . . I cannot help observing upon this conference with the Portuguese minister that the suspicions and refinement of his Court lead him rather farther than is to be supposed, for I really believe the activity of the Spaniards proceeds from their own ideas, and I am sorry to say, determined design against Portugal: but at the same time, notwithstanding the profession of the French ministers, I believe they are entirely in the secret of the Spanish Court, and that the whole depends on the Court of Versailles wishing

to avoid a general war ; but be that as it may, if the Court of Spain is determined to draw them in, they must ultimately be engaged *bon gré malgré eux*. It behoves therefore Your Excellency to seek every opportunity of endeavouring to convince the Court of France of our determined resolution, if things are pushed to extremity, to support Portugal, and it becomes the more necessary at this moment, as Mo<sup>r</sup>. Garnier has held a very extraordinary language to the Portuguese minister here, whether by orders of his Court or not is to be guessed at. The purport of it was, sounding Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pinto whether he expected any assistance from England, insinuating that it was natural for his Court to apply to France, who alone could be the mediator between them and Spain (for he did not believe England would interfere in it) and even avowing the seriousness of the quarrel between the two Courts. This is so very different from the language Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes holds that either the latter must be false or Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Garnier must be officiously impertinent. I could not however omit mentioning all these circumstances to Your Excellency, wishing to give you every information that comes to my knowledge in order to enable you the better to judge of what you observe at Paris, and to consider well the consequences you draw from the language that is held to you.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 293.)

St. James', 21 October 1774.

No. 54.

Half confidences are as bad as half measures : I shall therefore continue giving Your Excellency the fullest information of what passes relative to the dispute between Spain and Portugal . . . . . Your Excellency will see how necessary it is Spain should be impressed that we are serious in this business ; at the same time the greatest care must be taken to avoid any shadow of menace which would be unbecoming. You will therefore, if opportunity offered, speak of it in a grave and serious light, and I should hope Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, when he speaks of it, will not be quite so flip-pant as Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Garnier is here. The character of the man contributes, I am persuaded, a great deal to it, for, if instructed by his Court, he would naturally hold the same language Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes holds to Your Excellency, which is pretending ignorance of what is going on, and on the contrary Mo<sup>r</sup>. Garnier seems perfectly informed. . . . .

*(Ibid., no. 294.)*

St. James', 11 November 1774.

No. 56. Secret.

. . . . . I find by Your Excellency's no. 98 the old Parliament is certainly to be restored. The more I consider that measure, the more I am astonished at the conduct of the French King in absolutely giving up the most essential part of his prerogative, and the unaccountableness of the proceeding leads me to suspicions and refinements which I don't love, and which otherwise would not in the new reign have entered into my head; but on considering all the possible motives that could induce His Most Christian Majesty to consent to this very extraordinary step, I can find but one which makes it reconcileable to common sense, and I will hazard my opinion, let the event turn out as it may. We know for certain that their revenue is far from being in a flourishing state; their expence exceeds their receipt; their ministers are new in office. We know also that the Duke de Choiseul meditated a general bankruptcy, the only scheme in my opinion, however unjustifiable, that can save that nation or enable them to go to war. That scheme would never have done with a discontented nation, with the banished Parliaments in every province in opposition to government. May not the certainty the French ministers have that the old Parliament approve of this measure be one of the reasons for restoring them? Should that be the case (and I know no harm in supposing the worse) I should then think a war as near as I did in the Duke of Choiseul's time. I throw out all this merely as speculation. Your Excellency will receive it as such, but at the same time investigate as closely as possible all their manœuvres relative to this inexplicable conduct. . . . .

*(Ibid.)*

St. James', 25 November 1774.

No. 59.

. . . . . As the scene of the new Parliament is now opening, where the discussion of the American affairs will be brought on, I have only to add at present that I shall be glad to be informed from Your Excellency of the language that is held upon them at the Court where you reside, and that any lights you can furnish me with upon this subject will be very acceptable.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 294.*)

St. James', 2 December 1774.

No. 61. Secret and confidential.

Although Your Excellency's last dispatches of the 23<sup>d</sup> November were perfectly satisfactory, they do not require any immediate answer ; but I will not omit conveying to you every hint I receive, let it come from whatever quarter it may, which can in the smallest degree tend to enable you to discover the whole views of the Court where you reside. It is supposed by some speculative but well informed politicians that France is endeavouring to strengthen the good understanding with the Court of Vienna, as she thinks that channel the most adviseable for cultivating a closer connection with Russia, and that it is Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes' policy (very different from that of his predecessors) to keep Russia and Sweden at a distance till the former is on better terms with France than she seems at present disposed to be. I own my own notions of politicks would not have led me to suspect France having such pursuits, for I have rather thought the King of Prussia likely to play a treacherous game with Russia, and that France, not ignorant of it, would have taken the advantage and fomented the division between those two northern powers, for I think it is very observable since the Duke of Choiseul's political demise that the Court of Vienna has rather had too mean an opinion of French politicks to wish to be as closely connected with them as she formerly was. Perhaps my wishes may incline me to adopt this way of thinking, for I will frankly own, I had much rather see the old system restored, that is, Vienna and us united, than be forced to have any transactions with such a prince as the King of Prussia, who is too personal an enemy to this country ever to be depended upon. . . . .

(*Ibid., no. 295.*)

St. James', 27 January 1775.

No. 4.

. . . . We have certain intelligence that a very illicit trade is carrying on to His Majesty's colonies in America as well by British as by foreign ships, and as it becomes so necessary in the present juncture to prevent as much as possible the continuance of it, orders have been sent to the commanders of His Majesty's Ships in the American seas to be particularly attentive to intercept and

seize any British or foreign ships which may be found with prohibited goods or warlike stores destined for His Majesty's colonies in America. I have thought it not improper to mention this to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Garnier, and Your Excellency may take an opportunity of giving the same notice to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Vergennes, as it will be much easier to prevent mischief than to apply a remedy to it afterwards.

(*Ibid.*, no. 297.)

WEYMOUTH TO STORMONT.

St. James', 15 December 1775.

[No. 17.]

. . . . . I inclose to Your Excellency copies of two additional papers received from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pinto that you may be possessed of every information that comes to me on a matter of so much importance as the dispute between the Courts of Spain and Portugal. You will observe that the account of this business as transmitted by Lord Grantham in his dispatch of the 29th November of which Your Excellency has a copy, differs very materially from that state of it delivered to me by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pinto. I wrote on the 12th inst. to M<sup>r</sup>. Walpole to signify to him the King's pleasure that he express in the strongest terms to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal the necessity there is to give the Court of Spain satisfaction with respect to their question whether orders are given to the forces of His Most Faithful Majesty in South America not to act on the offensive. A candid discussion of the several rights of the two Crowns is not likely to take place, whilst this unwillingness to answer this question gives ground for suspicion, that they may take advantage of their superior strength in that part of the world. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 298.)

St. James', 2 February 1776.

No. 6. Most secret.

In addition to my letter to Your Excellency of this day's date, I am to acquaint you that as it cannot be known how earnest the French ministers may be in their application on the subject of the fishery at Newfoundland, and that the claim asserted on our part to the French Ambassador may give them much offence and is not of material importance to this country, since every motive must induce us to restrain the sedentary fishery, it is His Majesty's



pleasure that you endeavor, in case it should seem to you essentially necessary to keep this point for further discussion ; but Your Excellency will be careful not to give Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes any hopes of compensation by a cession on our part of any tract of coast, which can never be consented to, but rather you will suggest that means might be used to drive the residents from their present establishments. You will not fail at the same time to state to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes the real injury that might result to the French fishery by exacting such a rigid observance of the treaty, supposing they were founded in their interpretation of it. The means now used to leave them almost exclusively the extent of coast from *Baye blanche* to *Cap de Grat* could no more be practised, and our own fishermen would claim their full right to a concurrent fishery on that part of the island from whence with great diligence our naval commanders have restrained them. . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 299.)

St. James', 12 July 1776.

No. 24.

The very particular account Your Excellency has given of the state of the Court where you reside and the useful observations and reasonings that accompany it meets [*sic*] with His Majesty's fullest approbation. Other advices agree with yours with respect to the activity with which the preparations are making at the several sea ports, such indeed as the state of the finances of the kingdom would not induce one to expect. It has been suggested to you that Spain contributes largely to that expence, but it should seem that the period is not favourable for a war, when the first enterprize must in part be defrayed by an ally, and it appears extraordinary that no considerable naval preparations are making at this time in the ports of Spain. This armament would at all times be a matter of real importance to these kingdoms, but very particularly so just now when His Majesty's rebellious subjects may be encouraged by hopes of a support to their cause, or at least a diversion in their favour ; and it is not unlikely this consideration may induce the French Court, whatever other motives may direct their operations, to make a greater shew of preparations in hopes we may relax in our efforts, and that the submission of the colonies may be more tedious as well as more difficult, since they cannot be unwilling we should expend much treasure and much blood in

atchieving our purpose. At the same time I make these observations, it is proper I should recommend to Your Excellency a continuation of your attention to this great point.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 26 July 1776.

No. 29.

I cannot avoid making mention to Your Excellency of the armament carrying on at the several ports of France, rather from the great importance of the subject than from anything new I can have to say thereupon. Your Excellency's attention is directed to that point and you will not fail to transmit to me every thing you can collect that may tend to explain the intention of the French Court.

I transmit to Your Excellency herewith an edict of His Most Faithfull Majesty with respect to any American vessel that may put into the harbours of Portugal. It is unnecessary to apprise you that it would be very desirable that something similar should be done at the Court where you reside, but as in the present situation of affairs it would not be expedient to receive a refusal to any application on that subject, I must wholly leave the matter to your discretion not doubting that you will use the most proper means to try the practicability of a measure that would be important at the present crisis.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 16 August 1776.

Most secret and confidential.

Very credible information has been given me of some very important circumstances which by His Majesty's command I communicate to Your Excellency.

Mr. Deane, one of the Connecticut delegates, was appointed by a secret committee for foreign negotiations named by the American Congress as deputy to the Court of France to induce that Court to a favourable disposition and to ask from it supplies of arms and clothing for 25,000 troops with 250 brass field pieces. Mr. Deane was also appointed by a committee of commerce to purchase in France goods for presents to the Indians to the amount of £40,000 stg. Mr. Deane arrived at Bordeaux early in June and

at Paris early in July, and soon after had a long conference with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes who proposed, in order to avoid suspicion, that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Gerard should be the vehicle of so much of their correspondence as did not require a personal interview between Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes and Deane.

Before Mr. Deane's arrival in France, Mo<sup>r</sup>. Pinette, one of two French gentlemen who were in Philadelphia last winter, who had obtained a contract with the committee of Congress for trade, returned to France, and through the assistance of Mo<sup>r</sup>. du Bourg, a physician in Paris, had made some progress in procuring from the French ministry 15,000 stand of small arms: 13,000 of the arms were actually sent to Nantz.

About the middle of July Deane asked from the French ministry in behalf of the Congress, arms and clothing for 25,000 men together with 200 light brass field canon.

The arms were immediately promised by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, and Deane was given to understand that persons should be found who would furnish the clothing on the credit of the Congress, and accordingly Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Chaumont, a gentleman of great property, who lives at Passy, produced patterns to Deane at the Hotel du Grand Villars and voluntarily offered to become Deane's security to the government contractors to the amount of a million of livres for the purchase of the clothing. The brass canon being stamped with the arms of France, and it being doubtful whether the mark could be effaced without too much weakening the canon, Dubourg was commissioned to look out for a foundery and fixed on that of Angoulême which was found to be employed for the navy, but Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Sartine was to be applied to on that subject.

Beaumarchais was recommended to Deane by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes as a proper person to supply the Congress with such other goods and comodities as they might want. Beaumarchais offered to credit them to the amount of three millions. Deane proposed to obtain from him a quantity of ammunition and other articles wanted by the colonies.

These, my Lord, are the facts that are stated to me, and it were very desirable to ascertain as many of them as possible. The importance of the object will secure to it Your Excellency's full attention, and sufficiently bespeaks the greatest secrecy and circumspection.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 299.)

St. James', 27 September 1776.

No. 47.

There is too much reason to apprehend that the public tranquillity may be disturbed by the hostilities it is probable the Court of Madrid will commit against that of Portugal in South America, but the conduct of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal is such that no ground is left for representation against the armament now making at Cadiz. That minister declines answering to the strong and repeated applications made to him through M<sup>r</sup>. Walpole with respect to the restitution proposed by himself and so solemnly engaged to be complied with.

The observance of engagements is the first principle on which representations can be made ; it is not therefore possible at present to give Your Excellency any precise directions on this head, but I must recommend to you to avail yourself of any circumstance that may offer, to enforce to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes the danger that attends so large a force being sent by Spain to South America, unrestrained by any engagements, when perhaps a plan of limits might be readily agreed on at this time, if a reasonable one was proposed by Spain.

(*Ibid.*, *no.* 300.)

St. James', 25 October 1776.

No. 55.

The several circumstances stated in Your Excellency's dispatches respecting the armaments carrying on in the ports of France, which have been corroborated by several accounts and likewise the result of the conversations Your Excellency has had with the ministers of His Most Christian Majesty on the subject, have been taken into consideration by His Majesty's confidential servants.

The very strong and seemingly sincere assurances given by the French ministers that these armaments were no more than to restore their navy from the neglected state in which it had long lain to that in which it ought to be maintained, gave no sufficient cause to take any preparatory steps on our part, and His Majesty, ever sincere in his own professions, was unwilling to doubt the truth of theirs.

Yet the activity and diligence with which they have continued

their warlike preparations, by collecting seamen as well as stores of every sort, makes it essentially necessary that His Majesty should take some steps that he may not be unprepared if any motive should prompt the Court of Versailles to depart from that system of peace they have so industriously proclaimed it was their wish to maintain.

The opinion of His Majesty's servants has been humbly submitted to him, and His Majesty, whom no ambitious views impell on this occasion, and who is anxious that his candour and truth shall be evident on this, as on every occasion, commands me to signify his pleasure to Your Excellency that you acquaint His Most Christian Majesty's ministers that His Majesty thinks himself obliged in consequence of their armament to prepare himself against every event; that the squadron now preparing in their ports, which Your Excellency supposes designed for S<sup>t</sup>. Domingo, is an object of serious importance, more especially whilst that which has cruised during the summer under the command of Mo<sup>r</sup>. du Chaffaud, is ready to sail at the shortest notice.

The encouragement such a naval force in the West Indies may give to His Majesty's rebellious subjects at the time the utmost diligence of the frigates and cruisers of the Royal Navy cannot but in part prevent their receiving great quantities of arms and ammunition from the French islands, is an object of great concern to the success of that war His Majesty has been obliged to carry on against his rebellious colonies.

At the same time that Your Excellency acquaints Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas with His Majesty's resolution to prepare himself for defence if attacked, you are to renew in His Majesty's name his declarations of the most earnest and sincere desire of preserving and maintaining the general peace; that these professions are without reserve, and Your Excellency will urge them in the most clear and express terms, that His Majesty's meaning may not admit of doubt or misconstruction.

At the same time Your Excellency will express to those ministers that the present measures which prudence obliges His Majesty to take, are not connected with, nor have any reference to the matters in dispute betwixt the Courts of Portugal and Spain; that His Majesty will continue with the same sincerity he has already done, to urge the former to make the restitution to which that Court was bound by engagement, and that every means shall be used



on the part of His Majesty to settle the differences subsisting between those two Crowns.

The prudence and discretion of which Your Excellency has given so many instances makes it unnecessary to recommend to you that at the time you communicate the contents of this dispatch to His Most Christian Majesty's ministers in the clearest and most precise terms, you carefully avoid any phrase that shall convey either menace or offence.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 300.*)

St. James', 15 November 1776.

No. 58.

The free and explicit assurances given by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes to Your Excellency in the name of His Most Christian Majesty of his desire to maintain the present general peace are extremely agreeable to the King ; but sufficient reliance cannot be made on their sincerity if the squadron now preparing in their ports should sail for their islands. Such a measure will be so dangerous in it's consequences, that I need not suggest to Your Excellency after what I have written to you on that subject, how necessary it is to use every means in your power to prevent it's taking place.

It does not appear from any accounts received here from the West Indies that any rebellious spirit had shewn itself at St. Domingo. Yet less than that would scarcely justify encreasing largely the number to be fed when provisions were so much wanted.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 29 November 1776.

Private.

I am to confirm to Your Excellency by His Majesty's command the instructions given you by Lord Rochford for obtaining by means of pecuniary reward any important secret information whenever such an opportunity may offer.

In the present instance, if such a treaty has really been entered into by the Court of France with the Congress, as stated in Your Excellency's letter to me of the 20<sup>th</sup> instant, a copy should be purchased, if possible, at any price. And even if a copy can be procured of such a draught as has been made in concert by the French ministers with Deane, would be desirable even at some considerable expence. It is not however possible to mention to

Your Excellency what sum it would be proper to give, as that must necessarily depend on the means by which it is obtained, and the rank of life of the agent employed for that purpose, and His Majesty has no unwillingness to leave this matter wholly to the discretion of Your Excellency who is so well apprised of the importance of such an acquisition, if the authenticity can be well ascertained.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 300.*)

St. James', 20 December 1776.

Most confidential.

. . . . . The situation of affairs in America gives great reason to believe that the negotiation which D<sup>r</sup>. Franklyn may wish to carry on with the Court of France is but a secondary consideration, and that his own personal security may have had the most principal share in his intention of coming to Europe. The rebels abandoning their lines at Kingsbridge and flying with precipitation from works of infinite strength without a determined purpose, gives but indifferent expectations of success to their warmest supporters. The resentment of the deluded people may be suddenly raised against their wicked advisers and they may fall victims to the rage of a multitude on whom their ambition and self interested views have brought an accumulation of misery and unhappiness. The removal of D<sup>r</sup>. Franklyn's family at this time would seemingly give some corroboration to this idea. He could not know when he quitted America that General Carleton would have prudential reasons to put his army into winter quarters, and his apprehensions might be increased from that part of America. These conjectures may perhaps not be well grounded, but the success of His Majesty's arms of which I informed Your Excellency on the 18<sup>th</sup> instant gives you full ground for this representation of the cause of his arrival.

The sailing of M<sup>o</sup>. de Coudray and of the officers who accompany him cannot be prevented unless we had sufficient proofs to produce that their destination is for the continent of America. The taking a frigate of war would be such an act of hostility as nothing could justify but the most irrefragable evidence of the want of truth in the professions of the French King's ministers, more especially as Your Excellency believes that the capture of the ship would furnish no papers that would indicate any other destination than to the islands.

The state of the French navy and that of their finances are

strong circumstances to incline them to preserve a peace that is so essentially necessary to them at this moment. The means they have used to prevent a breach between Portugal and Spain would seem to confirm their desire of avoiding a war, and the clear and precise declarations they have so often made exclude them from a reasonable pretence for interrupting the tranquillity of Europe. Yet, my Lord, His Majesty is aware that specious appearances of great wealth from an exclusive trade to America, the certainty of the support of Spain if they require it, and the flattering hopes of recovering what they lost in the last war, may induce them to disclaim the ties of solemn declarations, and they will not find this country unprepared.

The idea generally diffused is that Spain has furnished large sums to France to enable them to make their present armament, yet I learn from Your Excellency that France has engaged to pay eleven millions of livres to Spain, and has actually paid one million of that sum. I must desire you to endeavour to ascertain this fact if possible, as the state of the French treasury makes this transaction extraordinary. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 301.)

St. James', 10 January 1777.

No. 3.

. . . . The well judged attention Your Excellency gives to the steps of Dr. Franklyn, and the important information you collect with respect to him is extremely satisfactory to His Majesty. The extraordinary Gazette which I transmitted to you on the 30th of last month will have shewn you that such has been the success of His Majesty's arms that the King's army will have its winter quarters in the most fertile parts of that continent and be in a position to commence their operations early in the spring with great advantage, unless those deluded men should in a short interval return to their allegiance. In such a situation the proposition of giving up Canada to France and Florida to Spain must appear extremely ridiculous. . . . .

The intrigues of the Choiseul party will probably be still more active on the arrival of the Emperor at the Court of Versailles. Your personal knowledge of that monarch's character and your unremitting attention to everything that passes at the Court where you reside will enable you to collect information that may be very material.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 301.)

St. James', 17 January 1777.

No. 5.

. . . . . However unlikely it may be that the French Court should connive at the project which Your Excellency has been informed was framed in America of giving letters of marque to French vessels in order to make captures of our trading vessels, it could not be improper to mention such a report to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, as it may tend to put that minister on his guard with respect to the many various schemes which eagerness of gain may induce individuals to frame. I am aware, my Lord, that in such times a diligent minister must avail himself of favorable opportunities and act without orders, but the discretion that has so constantly directed Your Excellency's conduct is a very sufficient security to yourself and to His Majesty's service.

His Majesty approves of the assurances you so often repeat of his pacifick intentions, and authorises Your Excellency to assert, as often as you shall see occasion, that the security of his Empire is the only object he has in view. The extent of the armaments here is directed by those of France and Spain, and have no other cause or object.

Your Excellency will express to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Creutz by His Majesty's command the satisfaction he receives at the friendly part His Swedish Majesty has taken in discountenancing the application of the American agents, which the King considers as a proof of that honorable and friendly attention that has on all occasions distinguished the conduct of the King of Sweden.

As His Majesty has not [*sic*] intention of making any new foreign levies beyond what are treating for, Your Excellency will receive with civility any proposition that may be made to you on that subject, but decline the offer.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 7 February 1777.

No. 10.

Nothing has been received from Lisbon since my last dispatches to Your Excellency. Whilst Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal continues the same silence he has so long observed, it is not possible to suggest any idea that shall tend to renew the negotiation. Advantage has

been taken of every event that could give ground to a representation from hence. The preparation of the Spanish fleet, the embarkation of the troops, the removal of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Grimaldi, the illness of His Most Faithful Majesty have been represented as circumstances that gave ground for some application to the Court of Spain in order to make a proposition that might be the means of opening some discussion of the matter. To these several dispatches, of which Mr. Walpole has transmitted translations to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal, who has declined on some pretence seeing him, no answer of any kind has been received, nor any communication of the views or intentions of the Court of Portugal.

In such a situation it is impossible to form any judgment of what Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal has in his mind. Your Excellency has been authorised on every occasion to make the most sincere assurances of His Majesty's earnest desire of re-establishing good harmony betwixt the Crowns of Portugal and Spain, and to express to the French ministers His Majesty's willingness to adopt and promote any measures that can lead to so desirable an end.

Inexplicable as Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal's conduct is, any conjectures may with more reason be formed upon it than that His Majesty, who from the commencement of his reign has invariably preserved the most ingenuous and candid conduct in all his negotiations, the most exact and rigid observance of truth in all his assertions and engagements, should on this occasion deviate from it. This, my Lord, Your Excellency will take an opportunity of expressing to the French ministers, whenever any suspicions may be implied that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Pombal's conduct proceeds from any encouragement given him from hence.

If the Queen of Portugal has been ignorant of what has been transmitted from hence, relative to the dispute between the two Crowns, as is implied by the office of which I sent Your Excellency copy last week, it may be hoped that the information she will gain on that head may induce her to take such measures as may tend to the reestablishment of peace in South America.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 14 February 1777.

No. II.

. . . . The great care the French ministers take that the succours the American rebels receive from France shall bear every



appearance of being sent by private persons, makes it inexpedient to remonstrate publicly on the subject, but Your Excellency very prudently represents to them the duplicity of their conduct in such a manner as shews them we are not ignorant of the unfriendly part they are taking, which is more disgraceful to their honour than injurious to our interest. . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 301.*)

St. James', 14 February 1777.

Confidential.

. . . . . It were certainly very expedient to avoid receiving any such proposition as that you have some suspicion Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas has formed an idea of,<sup>1</sup> since it could not meet with any success. The manner in which Your Excellency very properly expressed yourself respecting the successes that have attended His Majesty's arms in America, the great extent of coast of which the rebels are now deprived, and the reason there is to believe that this rebellion will speedily be reduced and America brought back to it's legal dependence, is the proper language to prevent any proposition being made that must be refused.

(*Ibid., no. 302.*)

St. James', 11 April 1777.

No. 24.

. . . . . The method which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de La Fayette and the other officers who accompany him have practised to quit France secretly in order to join the Americans, is such as will not permit representations to be made to the French ministry on that subject. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de La Fayette was lately here and presented to the King by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Noailles, a step not very consistent with the measures he was then pursuing. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 16 April 1777.

No. 25.

. . . . . I am now commanded by His Majesty to convey to Your Excellency his entire approbation of the steps you have

<sup>1</sup> To offer assistance in crushing the rebellion in return for the retrocession of Canada to France.

taken to encourage Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas to make the proposition for a partial *désarmement* as stated in your letter. The warlike preparations that have been made here having no other object but the security of His Majesty's possessions, and His Majesty having no views to disturb the peace of Europe, readily consents to diminish the naval force now ready for sea, provided the Court of France, as stated in the note marked A written by Your Excellency and approved by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas, shall on their part disarm eight ships of the thirteen at Brest and six at Toulon.

His Majesty consents that the *désarmement* should take place on the 7th, 14th or 21st May next, as Your Excellency shall agree with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas.

Your Excellency will observe to the ministers of France that if the exigency of our affairs, which we have no reason at present to expect, should require that more ships of the line should be sent to North America, such ships may be replaced here, notwithstanding the agreement, by the same number being put into commission. But in this case a confidential communication would immediately be made through Your Excellency to the French ministers.

The Court of France need have no reluctance to engage that no ships of the line shall be sent by them to the West Indies, Your Excellency having authority to declare that we have not one ship of the line there, the two Admirals having only fifty-gun ships, and there is no intention to send any from hence.

The Court of France will engage to use their utmost endeavor to stop the ships of Spain from going to the Havanna, and as a necessary stipulation previous to carrying this agreement into effect, assurances must be given that no further naval armaments shall be carried on by that Crown.

Your Excellency has full authority to declare that no alteration of any kind is made in the instructions given to the naval commander at Newfoundland, and that the French subjects will have nothing to fear.

On receiving from Your Excellency the list of the ships which the Court of France propose to disarm, a list shall be returned to you immediately.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 302.)

St. James', 18 April 1777.

No. 26.

. . . . . The facility with which the rebel privateers obtain in the ports of France what assistance is wanting to their refitting is totally inconsistent with the negotiation now carrying on by Your Excellency with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas, and though you have with great propriety strongly stated this both to him and to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, you will no doubt in consequence of the information transmitted to Your Excellency by Messrs. Barton & Co.<sup>1</sup> represent to the French ministers the inconsistency of their conduct.

. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 18 April 1777.

No. 27.

I have letters from Mr. Walpole of the 19th and 29th of March in which he informs me that "notwithstanding all he could offer to engage Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mello to adopt some measure to open a negotiation with Spain, he remains persuaded that the Court of Portugal cannot in the present state of things address themselves to that of Spain, the great armament being sailed, and by the uncertainty of what may have been its operations putting it out of their power to make any proposal to Spain but what must be disadvantageous and dishonorable to Portugal." He further acquaints me that he had seen the other ministers, who generally agree in sentiments with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Mello, but Mr. Walpole adds: "it seems to me as if they wished, though they will not venture to propose it, that His Majesty should of himself endeavour to find some new expedient with Spain for accommodating of matters between the two Courts."

It were very desirable that with such wishes they may adopt the idea suggested to them in my dispatch of the 25th of March of the application immediately to the King of Spain from the two Queens.

It should seem that the Court of Lisbon is not very apprehensive of the operations of the great armament fitted out by Spain, yet we cannot see that making in their ports in Europe with indifference,

<sup>1</sup> Letter of 5 April 1777.

and that there is reason to apprehend that a considerable naval force is on the point of sailing for the Havana. This may not be very important to Portugal, but it certainly is to His Majesty's possessions in the West Indies, where we have not one ship of the line.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 2 May 1777.

No. 31.

. . . . . I cannot but approve of the very proper manner in which you conducted your conversation with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas as related in your no. 73. Great candour and openness appear in his professions, but the different part that Spain now takes from that we had reason to expect from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Grimaldi's conversation with Lord Grantham on the subject of a mutual *désarmement* must make us very wary in our proceedings.

In consequence of your dispatch and the information you obtained from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas, Lord Grantham has been instructed to have an explanation with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Florida Blanca, with respect to the ships supposed to be destined to the Havana, in which he is directed to acquaint that minister that His Majesty will send a squadron to the West Indies if any naval force is sent thither on their part. Lord Grantham is directed to avoid everything that shall look like a menace, but to represent this as a friendly communication that it may not hereafter be represented as a cause of alarm or a subject for complaint.

I am commanded by the King to inform you in answer to the queries in your no. 74 :

1<sup>o</sup>. That you are authorised, in case Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas should propose any day subsequent to the 21<sup>st</sup> inst. for the particular *désarmement* of eight ships of the line, to accept the proposal.

2<sup>o</sup>. A positive assurance on the part of Spain that her armaments shall cease is to be made a previous condition *sine quâ non* of the *désarmement*.

3<sup>o</sup>. His Majesty thinks it will be expedient, before the intended *désarmement* is agreed to, that Your Excellency should declare that in case any French or Spanish ships of the line are sent to the French or Spanish settlements in the West Indies, a British squadron must be sent into those seas, and the ships sent thither replaced at home by putting an equal number into commission. . . . .

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 302.*)

St. James', 9 May 1777.

No. 33.

. . . . . The accounts by the last mail from Cadiz, which are of the 11th of April do not in any measure agree with the general purport of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes's conversation, who represented to you that on the 20th of April "the Spanish minister was still full of fears and suspicions," yet we are credibly informed that in consequence of an order which came from Madrid on the 7th of April the powder was landed from on board the ships of war at Cadiz and deposited in the magazine at the arsenal . . . . . and that Don Miguel Gaston's flag was still flying, but there was no appearance of any of the ships being fitting out.

These facts, if they are true, would give reason to suspect that the *désarmement* was delayed on other considerations than those respecting Spain, and it is not improbable that the French ministers may think such a measure may cast too much despondency on the American rebels. Your Excellency will probably very soon be able to judge whether there is ground for this suspicion. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 6 June 1777.

No. 38.

. . . . . The representations you have made respecting the cutters fitting out at Dunkirk I hope will be the means of preventing that scheme from taking effect.

The causes of complaint in the West Indies are so numerous and occasion so much well grounded representation that I am, by His Majesty's command, to direct Your Excellency to state the matter fully to the French ministers. It appears from the letters of very credible persons that those seas are infested with privateers, the property of Frenchmen and manned by people of every nation. Perhaps a single American is on board who calls himself the captain, and shews a commission granted him by Bingham, the agent of the Congress at Martinique. If the vessel is boarded, they shew French papers and all the crew talk French. If the sale of their captures was not connived at as well as their fitting out, they could not carry on these depredations. . . . . The French ministers, my Lord, must be sensible that such practices



must be prevented, if they wish to preserve that harmony between the two Crowns it has been His Majesty's desire to maintain.

In answer to the question stated in your no. 96 I am directed to acquaint Your Excellency that whenever the French ministers may renew their proposition for mutual *désarmement* of some ships, a positive assurance on the part of Spain that her armament shall cease is to be made a previous condition *sine quâ non* of the *désarmement*, notwithstanding the account transmitted by Lord Grantham.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 20 June 1777.

No. 41.

. . . . . Though all the redress we have a right to expect is not obtained by the proper and frequent representations made by Your Excellency to the French ministers, yet it is necessary to continue them that they may not be able to plead ignorance of the several facts and urge that the want of knowledge prevents the redress they wish to give to injuries they are in effect encouraging with great industry.

Cunyngham and his crew are released and they are to go on board the cutter fitting out at Dunkirk which is to be called the *Greyhound* and is to mount 14 guns. One Hodge has engaged thirty more seamen at that port to go on board the vessel and Cunyngham is instructed not to carry his prizes into Dunkirk.

Beaumarchais has sent his secretary Freney to Dunkirk, where he has hired vessels to carry out the brass cannon and military stores collected in that place: one is sailed, the other was soon to follow.

Lundi of the French navy who was Bougainville's lieutenant, has entered into the continental service and is gone to Marseilles to take charge of a ship loading brass cannon and military stores for the rebels.

Capt<sup>n</sup>. Roux has received a pension and is to retain his rank in the French service. He is the person employed to superintend the vessels building in Holland.

Weeks, Johnson and Nicholson, after refitting their vessels in the ports of France, where they have been supplied with stores of all kind, put to sea from St. Nazier the 27th May.

The captain of a small privateer from Maryland arrived the 11th of this month at Paris from Cherbourg, where he had carried

a prize loaden with Geneva, etc., taken off Guernesy. On application to Mor<sup>r</sup>. de Sartine's office he was advised to move his prize a little off the port of Cherbourg and previously invite purchasers to follow him. I send Your Excellency inclosed copy of a petition from the owners of this prize, though I apprehend it may already have reached you.

These particulars I have reason to believe are well founded and I cannot doubt that Your Excellency will make a proper use of them. . . . .

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 303.)

St. James', 4 July 1777.

No. 43.

. . . . . The inclosed copy of a letter from Whitehaven will shew Your Excellency that fresh proofs have been lately given of the protection held out to the rebels in the French ports where the three privateers the *Reprisal*, the *Lexington* and the *Dolphin*<sup>1</sup> have been supplied with every thing that was necessary to them for their cruise; the last of them wholly fitted out at Nantes, and it appears that after their cruise they returned to some of the ports of France.

This account by His Majesty's command has been taken into consideration by his confidential servants and their opinion there submitted to His Majesty.

In consequence thereof I am commanded by His Majesty to signify to Your Excellency it is his pleasure that you acquaint the French ministers that however desirous His Majesty may be to maintain the present peace, he cannot from his respect to his own honour and his regard to the interest of his trading subjects submit to such strong and public instances of support and protection shewn to the rebels by a nation that at the same time professes in the strongest terms its desire to maintain the present harmony subsisting between the two Crowns. The shelter given to the armed vessels of the rebels, the facility they have of disposing of their prizes by the connivance of government, and the conveniencies allowed them to refit, are such irrefragable proofs of support that scarcely more could be done if there was an avowed

<sup>1</sup> On 23 June these ships took 15 vessels off the Mull of Cantyre, some were sunk, the others sent to France or America. Their crews were alleged to be in great part Frenchmen.

alliance betwixt France and them and that we were in a state of war with that Kingdom.

“The avidity of gain will tempt merchants in all countries to do very irregular things, and that avidity may not be easily controlled,” but the private views of the traders of France are not concerned in these transactions otherwise than by buying below their value what is supposed to be sold clandestinely in the case of the prizes carried into the French ports. Such a circumstance cannot weigh with a great state, whose views must be directed by greater considerations. The views of the rebels are evident; they know that the honour of this country and the proper feelings of the people in general will not submit to such open violation of solemn treaties and established laws acknowledged by all nations. The necessary consequence must be a war, which is the object they have in view, and they are not delicate in the choice of means that may bring about an end so much desired by them.

These reflections, my Lord, Your Excellency will communicate to the French ministers, expressing at the same time that an explanation is desired, not a menace intended; but on full consideration of the present circumstances, they must be satisfied peace, however earnestly wished, cannot be maintained, unless an effectual stop is put to our just causes of complaint. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 25 July 1777.

No. 47.

. . . . . The several dispatches containing an account of the conversations you have held with the French ministers with respect to the orders signified to you in my no. 43 have been fully considered, and the assurances given by the French Court are satisfactory to His Majesty, provided they fulfil the several engagements they enter into. They have taken the utmost line that can be allowed them, and any deviation from it will make a war, however great the evil, preferable to a state which must injure materially the commerce of this country, and disgrace it in the eyes of all Europe. Connivance on the part of their officers at the several ports must be considered as authorised by the ministers, as it is well known there is an energy in that government that does not admit of the disobedience of their officers.

What has lately passed at Dunkirk does not give great encouragement to believe that a severe execution of the orders sent to the ports will be observed, since Cunningham's vessel has been allowed to sail on security given by Hodge, who cannot be considered in this case as a responsible man. This circumstance does not agree with the assurances given to Your Excellency by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes and confirmed by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas, and does not imply that good faith on which he values himself, which the frankness and candour of this Court deserves, and which the present situation requires.

I am to signify to Your Excellency His Majesty's commands that you acquaint the French ministers of these particulars and further inform them that their professions are agreeable to him, but that Your Excellency is directed to apprise them of every circumstance that shall come to your knowledge in which the orders, which they engage shall be observed, shall in any wise have been eluded. In such critical situations a relaxation in the execution must be of the utmost importance.

Your Excellency will endeavour to obtain information what are become of the five prizes taken by the *Reprizal* and her consorts, and said to have been carried into Nantes. That in case they are still permitted to remain in that port, Your Excellency may claim them for the benefit of the owners.

The sequestration of the three privateers the *Reprizal*, the *Lexington* and *Dolphin* would be a proper measure if such security will be required of them as shall be of effect ; but if such is taken as has been with respect to Cunningham, it would seem that they are only waiting till a favourable opportunity shall offer to do more injury to this country.

I have seen Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Noailles who has read to me the paper which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes communicated to Your Excellency. He was instructed to accompany this communication with such assurances as would be very satisfactory, if the facts should hereafter agree with them.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, no. 303.)

St. James', 1 August 1777.

No. 48.

. . . . . Though the most exact observance of their promises was not expected from the French ministers, yet such an apparent

shew of truth was supposed as would in some measure secure the European seas from the depredations of the American privateers.

Cunningham's vessel immediately on sailing from Dunkirk has taken several prizes. He had a considerable number of French subjects on board. This fact is clearly ascertained. He put twenty-one men on board one of the vessels he had taken ; the English have brought this prize into Yarmouth, and on examination it appears that sixteen out of the twenty-one men from Cunningham's ship were French. . . . .

The agents of the American rebels boast that as the *Reprizal* was not in a situation to put to sea from the damage sustained in her chase by the *Burford*, a pretence has been concerted with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Sartine that shall allow a sufficient delay to enable her to refit for another cruize, and that the *Dolphin* is to be continued as a smugler, as she was at first, and a frigate bought at St. Malo is to be fitted out to replace her.

They further assert that it has been recommended to them by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Sartine to send their prizes into the ports of Spain for the present. This seems fully confirmed by the instructions given by Cunningham to his prizemaster.

The *Hippopotamus* purchased by Beaumarchais and the two frigates which are to be prepared in the Mediterranean, are additional proofs of the want of sincerity in the declaration of the Ministers to Your Excellency, and must also be noticed if you have sufficient information on the subject.

What has lately happened with respect to Cunningham requires the most earnest and serious remonstrance. I am therefore to signify to Your Excellency His Majesty's commands that you express to the French ministers His Majesty's surprize at the little attention paid to the orders which they declared had been given. That you further acquaint them that the representations made by Your Excellency in consequence of the orders contained in my no. 43 were directed after the most serious consideration, and cannot be waved without entire satisfaction.

It is not possible to doubt of His Most Christian Majesty's sincerity, when his professions of a desire to maintain the present peace are made so clearly and precisely by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes by their master's command ; but if facts contradict those professions, by the connivance of officers



unpunished, the same motives that prompted His Majesty to direct the representation, will compel him to seek the only remedy that is consistent with his honour and the interest of his subjects.

(P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 303.)

St. James', 8 August 1777.

No. 49.

. . . . . In addition to my no. 48, I am further to signify to Your Excellency His Majesty's commands on the following points.

It is indispensably necessary that the privateers said to be sequestrated in the ports of France, should be sent from thence, but without the convoy of a man of war, as such a measure would be the most public avowal of the protection they have already clandestinely given to the cause of the rebels. Your Excellency will therefore very strongly insist on the removal of these vessels without delay.

It has been reported that the privateer the *General Miffin* on entering the harbour of Brest saluted Mo<sup>r</sup>. du Chaffaud and that the salute was returned. This was a compliment that was surely ill timed, and out of regard to this country and the vessel being known to be a privateer might have been dispensed with. I cannot avoid on this occasion observing that *les secours d'humanité*, which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes mentions, may be extended very far, more particularly as the Americans at Paris have boasted that it was concerted with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Sartines, that when it should be materially convenient to them to enter the ports of France, that they should stove their water casks and pretend to have a leak in the vessel. Your Excellency will urge the necessity that this privateer, the *General Miffin*, should immediately depart from Brest.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes having desired that Your Excellency would acquaint him with such circumstances as might arise by the non observance of the orders they profess to have given, you will state to him that the Guernsey prize carried into Cherbourg, after having been ordered out as American property, was sold just without the harbour and then carried back into port as French property. Such proceedings are not consistent with either the letter or the spirit of their engagements, and are collusions unworthy of a great nation. . . . .

*(Ibid.)*

St. James', 29 August 1777.

No. 52.

I am to signify to Your Excellency His Majesty's pleasure that you take the proper steps to obtain an audience of the Most Christian King, and that Your Excellency should then state to him that you have been commanded to take that step in order that His Majesty's intentions might be explained in the fullest manner, when such measures were taken as might alarm the rest of Europe.

The support His Majesty's rebellious subjects have met with in France, the supply they have received from thence of all kind of military stores, and the personal assistance of many officers of distinguished rank, have delayed the submission of the colonies to the mother country. Yet His Majesty has on every occasion directed you to express his earnest desire that the peace subsisting between the two countries might be maintained, and attention has been given on the part of His Majesty that every circumstance might be removed that could in any degree interrupt the present harmony, and every measure avoided that could give any alarm or suspicion of hostile designs.

When a considerable naval armament was preparing in the ports of France, His Majesty renewed his professions of peace and unwillingly made such preparations as prudence required, but the extent of them was limited to those that were making in His Most Christian Majesty's dominions.

When, in conversation with Your Excellency, the French ministers implied that the naval force armed in both Kingdoms might be considerably diminished, His Majesty expressed his willingness to adopt such a measure, having had no other motive to make those armaments than the necessary prudence of not being unprepared when a great and neighbouring power was arming.

The protection and support given to the privateers of the rebels in the several ports of France made representations necessary, and at the time they were made, professions of His Majesty's desire to maintain the present peace were again renewed.

The measure seemingly adopted in France of sending a considerable military force to the West Indies at this critical time can be considered but as the consequence of some doubt of the sincerity

of His Majesty's pacific professions, and may be viewed by this nation as the first step to some hostile designs on the part of His Most Christian Majesty. It becomes therefore necessary that Your Excellency should in the King's name express to His Most Christian Majesty his earnest desire to maintain the present tranquillity, and that you should acquaint him that the military force now sending to the West Indies is the only cause of the preparations that must necessarily be made in this Kingdom, in case such a measure should be carried into execution. His Majesty disclaims every idea of hostile intention, every ambitious motive. The suppressing of the present rebellion in America has been the immediate object of every preparation that has been made, exclusive of those which the equipment of a fleet in the ports of France had made necessary.

His Majesty has directed that this declaration should be made immediately to His Most Christian Majesty, that it might be a stronger pledge of his sincerity, and that whatever might be the future consequences of the great armaments made in both countries, it might be evident to all Europe that they were on his part merely the consequence of those made in France.

It is unnecessary, guarded as Your Excellency always is in your expressions, to recommend to you to use such terms as are suitable to the Sovereign you represent and to the Sovereign you address.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 303.)

St. James', 29 August 1777.

No. 54.

Every argument should be used, and every means should be tried to prevent the military force now preparing in France for their West India islands from being sent there; as such a measure will be so alarming to this country that the fears of the persons concerned both in the trade and property of our islands will make it necessary to increase considerably our naval force.

Strong and solemn assurances have been repeatedly made that no intention of attacking the possessions of France in the West Indies has ever been in contemplation. Your Excellency is now instructed to renew in the clearest and most precise terms to the French ministers, assurances that no attempt will be made from hence of any kind to disturb the public tranquillity. That the declaration you are directed to make in the King's name to His

Most Christian Majesty is a fresh pledge of His Majesty's earnest desire to remove any apprehension on that head. The case is not of a nature to admit of proof, but the solemn declaration of a Sovereign whose faith has ever been inviolate should leave no doubt on this subject.

The expedient proposed by the French ministers that some subjects of France should purchase the three privateers cannot be admitted. The crews would remain liable to enter on some new piracies, and a public avowal of the professions of the French is wanted on this occasion. Your Excellency is therefore directed that this part of their engagement be strictly adhered to, and that these vessels be sent out of their ports in the state in which they entered them. . . . .

The *Hanover Planter* and the *Clarendon*, two very considerable ships bound from Jamaica, have been taken by an American privateer and probably carried into some port of France. One of them is in all likelihood the vessel carried into Painbeuf and mentioned in Your Excellency's letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. You will use every means in your power to recover these vessels for their owners. They have been carried into the French ports since the declaration that none would be suffered to be brought in, and offer the French ministry a fair opportunity of proving the sincerity with which they mean to conform to their engagements. The recovering these ships is in all respects very desirable, and it will tend to quiet the minds of the people in this country, who are with reason incensed at the depredations on their property, which the support France has given to the rebel privateers has chiefly occasioned. I cannot therefore too strongly recommend this matter to Your Excellency's attention. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 305.)

St. James', 26 December 1777.

No. 75.

. . . . . The support given by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Bouillé to the rebels is confirmed by so many different accounts that little attention can be paid to a letter that is written probably by him with the design of being shewn to Your Excellency. It is much to be wished that your representations may have effect.

Notwithstanding the strong assurances given by the French ministers of their earnest desire to prevent a rupture between the

Turks and Russians, it is still very probable that they have not been sincere in their endeavours for that purpose. Your Excellency will attend to this important event, as well as to the suspicion that is entertained of another division of Poland.

It is not improbable that the immediate object of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Goltze's long conversations with the French ministers is the supply His Prussian Majesty offers them of naval timber from his territories, but the ill humour he has lately shewn to this country gives reason to suspect that it may have some other additional object, which Your Excellency may possibly be able to discover. . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 305.)

St. James', 26 December 1777.

No. 76.

It is expected that Lord Howe will find it necessary to send home some of the ships of the line in order to their being refitted, as they have been long in America; and as the ill success that has attended General Burgoyne's expedition may make a larger naval force necessary in that part of the world, it has been thought expedient that six more ships of the line should be put into commission. I am to signify to Your Excellency His Majesty's pleasure that you acquaint the French ministers with the motives of this measure, assuring them at the same time that His Majesty continues in the same sentiments with respect to his desire of preserving the general peace, and that it is with reluctance His Majesty takes a step that might give some appearance of an alteration of sentiments if the real motives were not stated. Your Excellency will use the strongest and the most precise terms on this occasion that can express the sincerity of His Majesty's professions.

(*Ibid.*, *no.* 306.)

St. James', 2 January 1778.

No. 1.

. . . . . It was extremely proper to communicate to the French ministers the report so generally prevailing that a treaty with the colonies in rebellion, as an independant state, was agreed upon by the Court of France. If the conduct of the French ministers had agreed with their professions, the assurances Your Excellency has received from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas ought to leave no doubt that the report has no foundation in truth. The



report prevails here very generally, but no information that has been received establishes the fact. Your Excellency will attend with your usual diligence to this important matter and from the useful connections you have formed, you will not be long in doubt what credit is to be given to the report. You acted very properly in declaring to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Maurepas that you were not engaged in any treaty with the agents of the rebels, as in such cases it is very proper to act with openness, when you expect it from him.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 30 January 1778.

Most confidential.

. . . . The time and the manner of Your Excellency's application to the French ministers respecting the treaty said to be entered into by them with the Americans in rebellion are very much approved by His Majesty. The result of your conversations gives too much reason to believe that war seems to them an expedient measure, and that a treaty with the rebels is forming, if not on their part concluded. The whole tenor of your conduct, my Lord, meets with His Majesty's gracious approbation, and it is in such times that the ability and zeal of a minister is most conspicuous.

In the present critical situation I have not in command to give Your Excellency any particular instructions. Your judgment will direct you in the proper method of penetrating into the intentions of the French Court when opportunity may offer, and I trust the power of this country, when exerted, is equal to repel any of their insidious designs.

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 27 February 1778.

No. 9.

. . . . It were much to be wished that the differences subsisting betwixt the Russians and Turks had been made up, and it is probable that if the Courts of Versailles and Vienna were sincere in their endeavours for that purpose, a rupture might still be prevented.

The death of the Elector of Bavaria has occasioned much alteration in the systems of the continental powers of Europe and it may be very difficult at this time for the French Court to

gratify the ambitious views both of the Court of Vienna and that of Berlin.

There is too much ground to believe that a closer connection subsists between the Austrian and French Court than was supposed, and it is suspected that at this time a negotiation is on foot for the mutual guaranty of their respective dominions. I give this information to Your Excellency that you may direct your attention to this important point. . . . .

The report so long circulating that a treaty of alliance betwixt France and the colonies in rebellion is actually signed, gains every day more general belief, but whilst no measure is openly taken in consequence of it, it may still be doubted. It is most likely that the first article of such a treaty should be the acknowledgment of the independance of America, and if the treaty was actually compleated, it is most probable they would not delay giving that countenance to their new allies. No advantage can arise in the present minute from demanding a categorical answer on this important object, and less than that, would be nugatory, as no dependance can be made on the professions of the French ministers. I can not doubt of your continuing your endeavours to ascertain what may be true on this matter, and I am aware how difficult the task is, as each party gives countenance to the report of the existence of such a treaty, that it may mislead His Majesty's councils and affect public credit. There is much reason to believe the rebel colonies have met with as little candor and truth from France as has been shewn in the negotiations with this country.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Florida Blanca has repeatedly expressed to Lord Grantham His Catholic Majesty's desire to see every cause of distrust removed between this Court and that of Spain, which cannot see without alarm our great military preparations. Little dependance can be made on such words, when so many facts exist to contradict their sincerity; on the contrary, they seem intended to lull us into security, that their hostile schemes may have surer effect.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 78, no. 306.*)

St. James', 13 March 1778.

No. 12.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Noailles having this morning presented to me a paper, copy of which I enclose to Your Excellency, in which by order

of his Court he acquaints me that a treaty has been concluded by His Most Christian Majesty with the colonies in rebellion, I am to signify to Your Excellency His Majesty's commands that you quit Paris without taking leave and return to this country. You will endeavour to give notice to as many of His Majesty's subjects as you can conveniently of the orders herewith sent you.

## THOMAS GRENVILLE

1782

THE diplomatic career of the founder of the Grenville library began in no promising fashion, for he was sent "without any authority" to Versailles in May 1782, where he stayed till July, when, Fox having resigned, he immediately demanded his recall, "it being my fixed purpose, firmly tho' as humbly and respectfully as it is possible, to decline any farther prosecution of this business." His instructions are printed in Lord John Russell's edition of the *Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox*, London, 1857, Vol. IV, pp. 194-8; and the despatches addressed to him by Fox during his residence in Paris, are to be found in the same volume.

## ALLEYNE FITZHERBERT

1782-1783

ALLEYNE FITZHERBERT was one of a band of able diplomatists, of whom James Harris and Joseph Ewart were conspicuous examples, who rose to prominence after the close of the war of American independence. On Grenville's resignation, he was transferred as minister from Brussels to Paris to carry through the negotiations for preliminaries of peace, which he successfully accomplished. From Paris he was transferred to St. Petersburg. There is an account of his life in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. In 1791 his diplomatic services in Spain in connexion with the Nootka Sound dispute gained him an Irish peerage as Lord St. Helen's, which in 1801 was reinforced by a British peerage for work in Russia.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 49.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . ALLEYNE FITZHERBERT . . . . .  
APPOINTED MINISTER TO . . . . . THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 27 July 1782.

Whereas in consequence of Our earnest desire to put an end to the calamities of war in which Our Kingdoms are engaged by the aggression of Our enemies, We thought fit to direct Our trusty and welbeloved Thomas Grenville Esq<sup>r</sup>. to repair to the Court of France to make overtures of peace and to explain to the Minister of Our good brother the Most Christian King the basis on which a negotiation for the purpose of concluding a peace between Us and Our good brother could be entered upon, and whereas the said M<sup>r</sup>. Grenville after having made some progress in the business with which We had charged him, has desired and obtained Our leave to return to England, We have now thought proper to direct



you to repair to the Court of France, furnish'd with such papers and information as may enable you to continue the prosecution of this important business, and to give you the following instructions for your conduct in the execution of the trust We have reposed in you. And whereas for the more speedy attainment of the desirable object of putting an end to the calamities of war, We have thought fit to give you full powers for the purpose of treating of peace between Great Britain and any of the powers or states with which she is now at war, and for concluding and signing the same. We hereby authorise you to make overtures of peace to, and to confer and treat on the subject with, the ambassadors or ministers of the said powers or states.

1. You are carefully to peruse and attend to the contents of the various instructions given from time to time to M<sup>r</sup>. Grenville, as well by Ourselves as by Our direction thro' Our principal Secretary of State. You are to look on what you shall there find prescribed, as the rule of your conduct, and you are to exert yourself in the execution of the several points which are thereby recommended and enjoined; and you are principally to direct your attention to such parts of them as appear to remain hitherto unexecuted. For that purpose you are, on your arrival at Paris, to desire an audience of the Count de Vergennes, Minister and Secretary of State for foreign affairs, in which you will inform him of the object of your mission, and that you are furnished with a credential letter as Our Minister to His Most Christian Majesty, but you are not to deliver it (with it's copy) to the Count de Vergennes, till you shall receive Our further instructions from one of Our principal Secretaries of State.

2. You will in this audience of the Count de Vergennes repeat the assurances of Our regard for the Most Christian King and Our sincere desire to see a speedy and happy end put to the evils of a war which has so long subsisted; and you will likewise acquaint the Count de Vergennes that you have full powers from Us for entering into negotiation with the ambassadors or ministers of the belligerent powers or states, and that you are ready to produce them when necessary.

3. You will acquaint the Count de Vergennes and the ambassadors or ministers of the other belligerent powers or states, that in order to attain this desirable end, We are willing to declare Our intentions to cede to His Most Christian Majesty and his Allies the

point which has been at various times and upon various occasions declared to be the subject of the war ; that is to say, to accede to the complete independency of the thirteen American States, and in order to make the peace, if it should take place, more solid and durable, to cede to the said States the towns of New York and Charlestown, together with the province of Georgia including the town of Savannah, all which are still in Our possession, provided that in all other respects, such a general and reciprocal restitution shall take place in every quarter of the globe on the part of the belligerent powers as shall restore things to the state they were placed in by the Treaty of Paris 1763.

4. You are in like manner to proceed to carry into execution all such parts of Our instructions to M<sup>r</sup>. Grenville as are applicable to the state of the negociation at the time of its being intrusted to you.

5. You will inform the French Minister that you will be authorised by Us to present Our letter of credence whenever Our good brother the Most Christian King shall name a person on his part to repair to Our Court in quality of Minister from the said Most Christian King.

6. As it is extremely material that the Court of France should look upon your being sent there as a continuation of the commission with which M<sup>r</sup>. Grenville had been charged, you will be particularly attentive to remove any impression which his coming away and not returning may have occasioned. It was at his own most particular and pressing request that he was not longer continued to be employed on this service, and you will explicitly point out that no alteration whatever has or can take place in Our most earnest and sincere wish to see the blessings of peace restored on a solid, permanent, and honorable footing.

7. A paper dated the 21<sup>st</sup> of June last and delivered to M<sup>r</sup>. Grenville is the last transaction which passed between him and the French Minister, so that carrying the answer to it and enforcing it with every possible argument, will be the first point of your duty.

8. Being furnished with full powers to treat with the Ambassadors or Ministers of the Courts of Spain and Holland, you will to them respectively give the fullest assurances of Our desire of peace and communicate to them the proposition which has been made to France, which contains such unequivocal proof of the sincerity of Our intentions.

9. As it is more than probable that the Spanish Ambassador will alledge that the concessions made with regard to America are not matters in which the Catholic King is at all concerned, and that the causes of the war with Spain are different from those of that with France, you will observe to him that the questions said by her to be in dispute shall have the fullest and fairest discussion, and that as the principle of adopting the Treaty of Paris as a basis of negotiation does not preclude any subsequent restitutions and compensations, you are ready to receive any proposals which the Court of Spain may think fit to make.

10. With regard to Holland, you will not fail to express Our earnest desire to restore the antient harmony which had so long subsisted between the two countries, and you will hold out to them that the *uti possidetis* might be the basis of an arrangement with them.

11. Having thought fit to appoint Our trusty and wellbeloved Richard Oswald of the City of London Esq<sup>r</sup>. Our commissioner for treating and concluding a peace with any commissioner or commissioners named or to be named by the thirteen American States, you will preserve the most constant and intimate communication from time to time with the said Richard Oswald, for the purpose of aiding and assisting each other in the objects of your respective commissions.

12. Notwithstanding you are by Our full powers authorized to conclude and sign anything that may be agreed on between the several parties with whom you are to treat, it is Our express Will and Pleasure that you do not, in virtue of the said powers, proceed to the signature of any act whatever without first having Our special orders for that purpose from one of Our principal Secretaries of State.

13. If it shall be agreed on between the Courts of Great Britain and France that you and the person to be nominated by His Most Christian Majesty shall respectively enjoy in France and in England all the rights, prerogatives, franchises and liberties belonging to your characters as if the two Courts were in full peace, you are to be duly attentive to maintain Our dignity in all things touching the same and to take care that you be treated in the same manner as Ministers of your rank from Spain or any other crowned head, except as to the form of not delivering Our credential yourself to the Most Christian King in an audience.

14. You shall use your particular endeavours to inform yourself of the interior situation of the Court of France and of the actual state and dispositions of the French nation. You will also give a watchful attention to the conduct and motions of the Spanish and Dutch ambassadors, and also to those of the minister or agents from the American Congress there, and of all matters which may be of consequence and worthy of Our knowledge, you shall constantly give an account to Us by one of Our principal Secretaries of State, from whom you will receive such further instructions and directions as we shall think fit to send you, which you are to observe accordingly.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 179.*)

THOMAS ROBINSON, LORD GRANTHAM, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO FITZHERBERT.

St. James', 3 September 1782.

No. 4.

I have very great satisfaction in conveying to you His Majesty's most gracious and entire approbation of your conduct in the important business with which you are charged at Paris, as well in the management of your conferences with the French and other ministers as in the manner in which you give an account of them.

Your observation upon Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes's objecting to the belligerent powers treating separately was judicious and well founded, for besides the conveniency of adjusting in that manner a variety of different claims from so many quarters, it is further to be said that Spain has ever set forth the causes of her war with Great Britain quite distinct from those which France alledged as the foundation of her conduct, that Holland can have no pretence to make a common cause with France in any respect whatever.

It is exceedingly to be lamented indeed that the combination of His Majesty's enemies and the events of war have given any of them an opportunity of holding high language and drawing comparisons between their situation and ours. I should hope that in the course of the negotiation, this would not be urged, and am sure that your address will prevent it's being carried too far, as the object of all parties in the work of reconciliation ought to be the establishment of a permanent peace upon solid and reason-

able grounds, and not to impede it either by the mode of treating upon it or the terms to be arranged by it.

I observe that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes asked you if you had any particular instructions on the subject of the mediation. I can on this head only instruct you to continue the proper language which you have hitherto used, and to employ it so discreetly and respectfully towards the mediators that France shall have no pretext to make more mischief than has already been attempted with great success, I doubt, at Vienna. For that Court has with avidity imbibed the suggestions of France and spares no pains to influence the Empress of Russia, I trust hitherto without much effect.

The ministers of the mediating Courts have, as you know, pressed us by an *insinuation verbale* to open a congress and omit no opportunity of expressing their impatience for fresh assurances of our adherence to that system. They are anxious especially to know with certainty when and at what period of the negotiation at Paris it may be transferred to the mediation. You will readily judge how impossible it is to give them any precise answer to such an expectation, while our principal business is fairly and plainly to proceed in discovering the extent of the pretensions of our enemies by a direct negotiation with them.

I should see with much greater concern the several instances of disingenuousness which the French minister has betrayed in treating with you if I did not at the same time mark the acuteness with which you do not suffer them to escape you. Further examples of this will probably break out, chiefly on points that concern the interests of France singly. But if you discover any which particularly tend to affect the concerns of America, you will of course point them out to M<sup>r</sup>. Oswald in order that a proper use may be made of them. Indeed I have reason to think that even the independency of America, however ultimately advantageous to France, would not, if accepted now by the commissioners, be a measure agreeable to her, as the bond between them would thereby be loosened before the conclusion of a peace. It will therefore be highly material for you to watch the impression which such an offer, proposed to them as amply as it can be, will make on Mo<sup>r</sup>. Vergennes, and M<sup>r</sup>. Oswald will undoubtedly endeavour to counteract the discouragement which that minister may throw in the way of their accepting it. A discovery of their opinion of the French proposals at such a moment would be highly useful.



I have heard the abilities of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Brantzen much commended. He is represented as an ambitious man much attached at present to the Grand Pensionary of Holland, but likely to think and act for himself. Of this you will be the best judge upon a closer acquaintance. . . . .

After what passed between you and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes in your second conversation with him in which he said that if he learnt positively from D<sup>r</sup>. Franklin that he was satisfied with the full powers, he would on his part reduce into a set of specific demands the four proposals contained in the counterproposition of the 21st of June to which he would add a fifth. I say after that conversation there was every reason to expect that he would fairly have entered upon some explanation of them all instead of producing a single article to be discussed, and I must add that after making his progress in the business depend upon the American commissioners opening their negotiation, he shifts his ground exceedingly in pretending that he cannot go on till the Spanish and Dutch full powers shall arrive. This objection however is surely removed by this time, as Mo<sup>r</sup>. Aranda's full powers have doubtless reached him, and Mo<sup>r</sup>. Brantzen will probably have brought his with him from Holland.

This change in Mo<sup>r</sup>. Vergennes's mode of proceeding is, I agree with you, to be accounted for by his desire to secure a portion of the coast of Newfoundland before any American claims can be set forward. There is no doubt of great jealousy between them on that score, of which the enclosed extract and copies are an abundant proof. A circumstance this which it is highly necessary for you to be informed of; I therefore send them merely for your own use and guidance.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes's conduct is further to be accounted for from an intention in him to create delay himself, but to throw upon us the blame of it. For he is too enlightened a minister to suppose that any decision can be formed upon an article started in so unconnected a shape. He must well know that it is unprecedented, and feel that it is far from candid. A refusal from us to comply with the first single proposal might afford him a pretence for not proceeding and on the other hand our acceptance of it might engage us into granting the whole extent of concession on one point before others could be at all investigated. This is too obvious to be dwelt upon.

I have it therefore in command from the King to instruct you to declare that His Majesty has no wish more sincere and more ardent than the return of peace upon a fair and permanent footing ; that as the operations and events of the war have been extended to every quarter of the world, he is ready to enter into any reasonable adjustment of the interests of both Kingdoms wherever they are concerned, and for this purpose still wishes to know the terms upon which a pacification may be expected, and to see them proposed with the candour which the Court of France professes, in order that, being apprized of their extent, he may weigh them all together, tho' the separate articles must of course be considered and settled separately. This being the case, it is impossible to give any precise answer upon any one proposition till they are all brought forward together. At the same time you are authorized to say that declining in this stage of the negotiation to comply with the expectation entertained on this head, does in no respect preclude the arrangement of the respective relations of Great Britain and France upon the fisheries becoming a point of discussion, whenever it shall come forward accompanied with the specification of the other articles, which I must repeat that you are entitled to receive from Mo<sup>r</sup>. Vergennes upon his own declaration.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 305.*)

St. James', 23 September 1782.

No. 6. Most secret and confidential.

I took the opportunity of a messenger of M<sup>r</sup>. Secretary Townshend's on the 20<sup>th</sup> inst. to acknowledge the receipt of your's, no. 55, which was immediately laid before the King.

I am very glad that the instructions with which you were furnished, to represent to the French minister the impropriety of his producing his proposals in detached articles, had so good an effect as to engage him to undertake to collect in one point of view the several pretensions of his Court.

Altho' in his discourse with you, he deferred the execution of this promise for various reasons of no great weight to the end of the month, yet some circumstances with which we are unacquainted, as well as a desire (if he entertains it) of carrying on the negotiation, have induced him to take a short method of endeavouring to inform himself of His Majesty's sentiments and those of his ministers

on the different points which the Court of France means to bring into discussion.

For this purpose he despatched Mo<sup>r</sup>. Gerard de Rayneval, unknown, as he asserts, to anybody but his Royal master, Count Aranda and himself, and by a letter to me, accredited him as a person informed of the French King's intentions and possessed of his (Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes's) entire confidence.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval has of course had several conferences with me, and you will be enabled by this dispatch to confirm in the most particular manner every thing that has been said to him here.

I know no method of more clearly supplying you with the means of doing this than by His Majesty's commands to communicate to you a copy of a note which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Reineval drew up as a memorandum, and of the observations which occurred to me upon it. It will not however escape your notice that the observations are stated only as what might be done if hereafter approved, when the subject of them would come before His Majesty's confidential servants, whereas Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes's ideas may justly be supposed to be more decisive.

To this paper, which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Raineval is possessed of, I will now add, in the order of the several articles which it contains, the heads of such reasonings as you will urge in support and defence of the observations I have mentioned.

I imagine, and indeed understand that the next step in this business on the part of France will be to open to you the specification of the several articles stated in the paper delivered to M<sup>r</sup>. Grenville, which will give you an opportunity of entering into a discussion upon them with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, who will then give you his *projet* which you will receive *ad referendum*.

As the *note confidentielle* was only meant to give, and obtain if possible, information, it would have been useless to have subjoined any argument upon it. Else it would not have been unnoticed that the independency of America, when adjusted, and the expence of the war, was a sufficient sacrifice of itself, and ought not to be accompanied with any further expectations.

The importance of S<sup>t</sup>. Lucia is too well known to you to need any directions to enforce the value of that restitution. And I am to observe to you that S<sup>t</sup>. Vincents was at first added by the French to their claims. The retrocession of Dominica is now therefore the

only exaction insisted upon in the West Indies, for the restitution of all the islands captured by them in the war.

The final adjustment however of the restitutions and exchanges in the West Indies must be subject to much enquiry and serious deliberation at home.

I have in a paper of observations already communicated to you informed you that the southern coast of Newfoundland from Cape Ray to Cape May is possessed of great advantages in point of harbours and fisheries, and is therefore not to be given up.

You will not fail to speak of the western coast as very valuable, of St. George's Bay as of great importance, and above all give no hopes of any allowance to fish and dry to the south or east of Cape Ray which would take in Port au Basque.

You will also on this occasion, as on all others when any alterations are expected, point out in the strongest manner the high national value which is set on the fisheries and that nothing but the prospect of preventing future disputes could admit the idea of entertaining any new boundary to the respective districts.

I could not venture to give any the least answer to the notion stated by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, as appears in your no. 54, of France acquiring an island in lieu of St. Pierre and Miquelon, and to hold it in full sovereignty. This must come in the form of a proposition which, if it cannot be kept off, will meet with a full discussion. But you must observe that fortifying any tenable spot in these parts is in reality a greater source of present difference and future dissention than anything else relative to the island of Newfoundland.

I have great reason to think that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes will be very strenuous on the subject of Africa. The pretence of Senegal being an old possession of France is of no weight. The ostensible object of the French is to have an easier purchase of slaves than (as they say) they now possess, and indeed it was at first the only one stated on the mention of the African coast, tho' in the note it is increased to a demand of all Senegal. It was explained to mean Senegal as it belonged to France before 1763 and not Senegambia, as it is now called.

A great deal of information is necessary on this article. In the mean while it is impossible to go further in it than to insist that the cession of Senegal is by no means the only mode of answering that purpose, and above all no division can ever be admitted which

should exclude us from a share in the gum trade which is carried on to the north of the river of Senegal.

The very important and extensive object of the East Indies comes next under consideration. Upon this it is absolutely necessary to hold the strongest language of abiding by the Treaty of Paris on the subject of Bengal.

The admission of fortifying Chandernagore is not to be made in any degree. Masulipatam is equally to be kept under the same restrictions. Allowing the French to erect fortifications in the one, is breaking in upon the compleat hold we have upon Bengal, and in the other, is suffering them to divide one of our Circars from the rest, and giving them the means of supplying the country powers with every kind of support. And there is besides no pretence whatever for the French to want anything there but a freedom of commerce under us who are established and have a government and council at Musulipatam.

They profess not requiring territory and affect to talk only of a safe and free commerce. If the freedom of trade in certain districts is not to be refused to them, the safety of it must be explained. It must not be that safety which results from fortification on their side but from good policy, regulation, and justice on ours.

It will be very proper to take advantage of the French assertion of their not meaning to secure any territorial dominion, to establish the distinction between such acquisitions, fortifications and *comptoirs*, and point out to them that, commerce being their object in Bengal and Orixia, *comptoirs*, simply commercial houses, at Chandernagore and Musulipatam is all that they can reasonably expect, whereas at Pondicherri and Calicar, there might perhaps be less objection to their being allowed, as formerly, when those places were in their possession, a sufficient quantity of land to protect their town and pay their expences. And here I must observe that it is very material not to suffer any plan of an *arrondissement* near Pondicherri to extend so far into the country as Gingi, which is a strong place, and may be much more strengthened.

Any mention whatever of the French taking part in the concerns of Hyder Ally or those of any other country powers is to be absolutely discouraged and silenced, as it would lead to nothing but exciting numberless and endless disputes.

The settlement which the French had on the Malabar coast, I



mean Mahé, is not to be mentioned by you, if it can be avoided, but to be reserved to be made use of at last if necessary. I enclose for your information an interesting advice on the limits of that settlement, if ever they come into question.

I enclose an abstract for your information of the state of the English and French settlements in India at different periods, and a copy of an intended truce in 1754, which however is foreign to any scheme that could now be thought of; but it may assist in explaining the other paper.

The French proposal of naming a past period as a model for a future arrangement is quite inaplicable to the present state of India and the tenure upon which our possessions there are now held.

Upon the article of Dunkirk, which doubtless the Court of France has much at heart, it is impossible to say directly that it could be given up. But if it is, you would enhance with great truth the great condescension of His Majesty in consenting to the removal of such an hold over a possession of France, and you would not fail to lay great stress upon the confidence which the King would entertain of His Most Christian Majesty not to take advantage of such a generous concession; and this mode of reasoning might furnish you with the opportunity of pressing the French minister to rely on such assurances of security as we should readily engage to give to the French commerce in Bengal and Orixá.

Upon the next article in the note,<sup>1</sup> in the present state of the subject, I can add nothing to what is said in the observation upon it. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Raineval had no authority to speak and consequently could expect no answer. If ever this point comes to you in any indirect form, you will take no notice of it nor give the smallest encouragement to any supposition but that of keeping Gibraltar. If on the contrary it is regularly mentioned to you by the Spanish Ambassador, you are to take it *ad referendum* and remitt notice of it immediately, not failing to communicate in the most particular manner everything which may be suggested or proposed by him concerning it.

As to the Dutch, some good dispositions appear on the part of France in our favour. There seems no great inclination to allow their new companions in the war to obstruct the work of peace. You will therefore hold out that if restitution takes place, the

<sup>1</sup> Proposed retrocession of Gibraltar.

port of Trincomali must not be restored ; and whether you succeed or not, this must be strongly insisted upon.

I enclose to you an account of the Dutch settlements in India.

I now come to the last point mentioned in the note : the mediation. Here indeed I did suspect an intention to induce us by the bait of a speedy conclusion of peace, to throw a slight upon the Courts who have offered their good offices. This has, I am well informed, been already attempted ; I therefore made no scruple of enquiring into the meaning of the introduction of this subject. It was answered to me merely that the belligerent powers might be agreed upon it and go *pari passu*, ready jointly to reap the advantages of resorting to it or bear the blame of declining it.

This point is therefore answered in the terms which you will see in the observations, and France, if in earnest, would do well to endeavour to prevent the mediating Courts on her part from pressing their intervention.

Indeed, with regard to Russia, there is great reason to think her occupations about the Crimea take off her attention from all other consideration, and if France really wishes not to be entangled with the mediation, I imagine the Court of Vienna might without much difficulty be induced to suspend her sollicitations for a Congress.

I have now, as fully as the time would permit, gone thro' the various topics which have been mentioned on this occasion. There are none of them which will not bear some adjustment. The East Indies and Africa, among those relating to France, seem fraught with the most difficulty. Whatever further information I shall procure shall be sent to you, in order to enable you to engage the French minister to keep within the bounds of his present demands ; and His Majesty has great reliance on your making the best use of the materials which will be put into your hands.

After the communication which has now passed in the way of preparation, I think the sincerity of the Court of France will be put to the test by the next steps which they will take, and you will not fail to excite Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes to shape his propositions as fairly and as explicitly as possible, assuring and convincing him that the observations which have been made upon their *note confidentielle*, go to the full extent of what it is possible to come into.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 375.*)

St. James', 23 September 1782.

No. 10.

. . . . I can only observe to you that your distinction to Mr. Brantzen on the different situation of Holland with regard to us at this time from that in which no refusal to treat had taken place, was very just, and that we are in no respect bound by what was then offered. It was equally prudent in you to promise that your observation did not go to the exclusion of the principle which was advanced by him.

But it must be allowed by Holland and by France, if that Court takes any part in it, that the form of admitting in any degree the principles of the Armed Neutrality is not to be prescribed to us; and that the mode of doing it and the extent which may follow any acquiescence therein in any particular instance, is a consideration too weighty to be given way to, without knowing a great deal more than we do of the whole hope of the pretensions of His Majesty's many and combined enemies, especially as the Dutch seem to be imitating the conduct of the French minister in endeavouring to force and extract concessions in so partial a manner.

I take this occasion of observing on the subject of Newfoundland that I see the greatest difficulty in acceding to the idea of ceding an island near Newfoundland in lieu of St. P[ierre] and Miquelon.

(*Ibid., no. 2, p. 344.*)

St. James', 13 October 1782.

No. 12.

. . . . The extent and importance of the propositions contained in the French and Spanish specifications of the demands of their Courts make it impossible for me by this opportunity to say much upon them. . . . His Majesty saw with great concern that the first of them<sup>1</sup> contained proposals which go far beyond any thing which there has lately been any reason to expect from the Court of France. An expression however in your dispatch leads to a hope that a full and free discussion of the objections and answers to them is likely fairly to take place.

But if the concern which the King felt in this subject was great,

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the French proposals.

how much greater must it have been (mixed as it naturally was with the most just surprize) at the exorbitant demands made by Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda on the part of Spain. If that Court persists in supporting the extravagant reasonings of it's Ambassador, it will be responsible for holding out terms of peace which betray an aversion to the completion of so salutary an end.

It does not appear that you have seen Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes after you had received Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda's paper, so that no judgement can be formed how far he gives any solid support to the particulars contained in it.

The King and his ministers being now fully apprized of so many of the pretensions of his enemies, will give them the most mature and earnest consideration, and you will soon receive His Majesty's instructions upon them.

In the meanwhile I can only observe that the terms offered by France may bear some discussion, but those offered by Spain will bear none unless modified essentially in every particular. . . . .

*(Ibid. p. 347.)*

St. James', 21 October 1782.

No. 15.

It would be difficult to frame any answer to the memorial remitted to you by Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda except by giving a direct negative to it in the most explicit manner.

Such a measure might however be misinterpreted by His Majesty's enemies who would not fail to attribute to it a determination not to carry on the negotiation.

But before His Majesty resorts to what his own Royal feelings would naturally dictate on such an occasion, if they were not influenced by the most sincere desire of restoring tranquillity to his own subjects and those of the belligerent powers, it is necessary to know whether the Court of Spain really persists in the exorbitant and inadmissible claims stated in that memorial.

I have therefore His Majesty's commands to direct you that you should in the most temperate but firm manner, and as confidentially as the nature of your connexion with the Spanish Ambassador will allow, continue (as you have already with great propriety done) to urge him to entrust you with any modification he may be empowered to offer of the terms of his Court.

That minister has too much penetration not to know that the

Court of Spain has been looked upon by all Europe as the most likely of the powers at war to obstruct the return of peace, and that it highly becomes His Catholic Majesty to hold out such conditions of it as may silence those suspicions and not make himself responsible for the continuation of the war.

If the Court of France is at all in earnest, she will for her own sake lend her aid to that salutary work, and it will argue great disingenuity in Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes if he should pretend that his Royal master has not sufficient influence with the King of Spain to effect a reasonable change in His Catholic Majesty's sentiments.

The very entrance of Spain into the present war is the strongest proof of that influence.

The injustice of the part which Spain took and the want of foundation and even of pretence for joining France cannot be proved more evidently than by it's having in this memorial abandoned all the grounds of its supposed complaints and only given way to an unbounded desire of retaining everything which the chance of war and the power of combination have thrown into it's hands.

It is not meant that you should call back the attention of Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda to the pretended causes of the Spanish rupture, but it cannot but be observed to him that his Court has no right nor reason to expect any gratification of their demands as stated at present. To such unreasonable pretensions it is not possible to hold out specifically what modification of them could be accepted. What can His Majesty do but express his surprize, at least, of the idea proposed of offering the port of Oran for the acquisition of Gibraltar, a port which nothing but pride has hitherto hindered the Court of Spain from abandoning, proposed as an exchange for Gibraltar, so highly valuable in every sense to this country?

I am persuaded that after the very precise and solemn renunciation of all right to the fishery by the 18<sup>th</sup> article of the Treaty of Paris, the renewal of such a pretension must and will be deemed inadmissible.

I cannot venture to say whether or not some commercial regulations consequent to the new state of trade which may take place after the war, may be arranged ; nor can I tell whether the King might not consent to some means of quieting the jealousy with which the Court of Spain has ever eyed any permanent settlement of foreigners on the continent possessed by Spain in America.



If there are means of knowing from Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda fairly and explicitly whether the intentions of his Court continue such as he has advanced them to be, your discretion and address may perhaps affect the discovery.

As plain and direct an opening as he can give on this head will best lead to a right understanding of the footing upon which the two Courts can come nearer to each other than is now practicable. If this cannot be obtained it is difficult to say that any extremity would induce His Majesty to listen to the extravagant price which is set by Spain upon her accession to peace.

The close union and communication which, according to the last words of the French proposition, exist between the powers at war and France, gives a fair opening for you to communicate to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes the sentiments which the King entertains upon the Spanish memorial, and to discover whether any countenance is given to it by France in anything like it's present extent.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, *no.* 2.)

St. James', 9 November 1782.

No. 19.

Secret and most confidential.

. . . . . It was the unanimous opinion of the King's servants upon this occasion that a written answer should be sent over to the Spanish memorial. I accordingly inclose one which you will deliver to Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda in the same manner that you presented the answer to the French memorial, that is, you will enforce to the Spanish Ambassador your explanations and observations upon it, as you very properly did to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes.

I have in my dispatch No. 15 very sufficiently described the impression which the Spanish memorial made here. I need therefore not repeat that nothing but the King's sincere desire of peace could have induced His Majesty not to reject the acceptance of that paper. However, that no misrepresentation may take place on this occasion, His Majesty has determined to give the Court of Spain opportunity, if at all in earnest, for the attainment of the peace, to propose terms which may be more conciliatory in their nature and more admissible in their extent, as those which have been offered can form no basis for a negotiation. You will state this explicitly to the Spanish Ambassador, and add that this answer avoids entering into all the reasoning urged in support of

his propositions, not on account of any difficulty in confuting it, but because in reality long possession, recognitions by treaty, principles of equilibrium between great nations are better arguments than the weak and obsolete pretensions which characterize the Spanish memorial.

The answer to it states with great precision that the offer of Oran for Gibraltar is not to be listened to in the smallest degree, and you will confirm to Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda what it further contains, namely that had even the fate of war given Gibraltar as well as Minorca into the hands of Spain, the port of Oran could never have been accepted as a compensation for either of these possessions. The importance of Gibraltar to this country, both in real value and high popular estimation, keeps pace with the national principles which inspire the Court of Spain with so professed a desire to obtain that fortress. Their utmost endeavours for that purpose have failed in the most eminent degree, and the language of the Spanish Ambassador and the exceptions of Cuba and Porto Rico from the class of exchange which Spain might make, precludes such proposals as might be deemed admissible here and makes it quite impossible for any proposal to satisfy the views of Spain upon that subject to come from hence ; but nothing is more unreasonable than the expectation formed by Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda as stated in yours no. 61 that Great Britain should say what *would* content her.

To shew however the sincere desire of peace which His Majesty entertains, there remains for me to acquaint you that you are authorized by His Majesty's commands to hold out a relinquishment of our settlements on the Mosquito shore (supposing fair regulations to take place for securing to us our antient right of cutting logwood) and even the cession of West Florida as articles in which the King is disposed to give way for the sake of peace, rather than think of parting with the fortress of Gibraltar, provided that His Catholic Majesty is willing to consider the restoration of Minorca in the state it was in before the war, and the Bahamas, which we have reason to believe are by this time in our possession, as the price of peace on his side.

The obsolete claim of the fishery is out of the question.

You must however consider what I now state as the utmost to which this country can well be brought to consent to in any exigency, and I must at the same time acquaint you that His

Majesty reposes the greatest confidence in your prudence, address, and dexterity in the management of the last of these articles, vizt. West Florida, upon which the Spaniards do not rest so much as on what regards their own continent. On the other hand, we have every reason to believe the possession of West Florida, in present, highly valuable, and in many future views, invaluable. Nothing could tempt the King's servants to advise the possible relinquishment of it except their desire of diverting the Spanish councils from thinking of Gibraltar. You will therefore early apprize Count d'Aranda, and impress on Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes in such confidential conversations as you may find it expedient to have with him, that the King is determined to insist, if he should be prevailed on to agree to the exchange of Gibraltar, tho' it were for Cuba, that West Florida, as well as Minorca and the Bahamas shall be thrown into our scale.

I must further remind you, on this head, of the great advantage which you may draw without doubt from the American commissioners, as there can be none of a constant good understanding with them. In your free communications with Mr. Oswald, you must be thro'ly apprized of their anxiety on this head, and we have reason to believe that from the very beginning, the American commissioners have refused in the most determined manner any footing on the continent of North America to Spain as well as France: repeated intelligence confirms to us the disposition of France to every measure which can tend to open South America, as far as consists with decency to her ally. His Majesty depends on your constant attention to both these important circumstances, and your improving both to the advantage of Great Britain whenever the opportunity offers itself.

Considering the aggression of Spain (which is not meant to be insisted on, tho' a strong argument) considering the futility of the reasoning brought in support of all their unreasonable claims, considering the sacrifices which Great Britain at the close of a war with four enemies must unavoidably make, Spain has no pretence whatever to insist upon the high terms offered by her. Her sincerity for peace will inevitably be doubted, her conduct blamed by the world, and the exorbitancy of her demands be frustrated. For you may safely assure the Spanish Ambassador that sincerely anxious as the King, as his ministers, and as the whole country are for peace, yet when conditions which ought not to be offered

are proposed, the dignity of the Crown, the safety of the ministers, and the voice and arms of the nation will oppose it.

The Court of Spain will now know that the exchange of Oran for Gibraltar is inadmissible; that this country is entitled to and expects a reasonable footing in the Mediterranean, and that some of the demands made may meet with facility in being complied with: I mean at Honduras and West Florida. It therefore remains with that Court to determine whether, thus informed, and thus called upon for conciliatory and reasonable offers of peace, she will persist in being responsible for obstructing it.

The conduct of France upon this occasion and in this juncture will be a test of her sincerity.

The intimate union and connexion between the Courts of France and Spain, the opinions delivered almost without reserve by the minister of the former upon the conduct and language of the Ambassador from the latter, and the expectations which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes seems confidently to entertain that Mo<sup>r</sup>. d'Aranda is possessed of the secret of his Court and will have it in his power to act upon it, are all circumstances which make it expedient and perhaps necessary that the French minister should be made acquainted by you that you have presented an answer to the Spanish memorial and have received the King's instructions upon it.

For this purpose you will therefore without scruple avail yourself of the degree of confidence and communication which upon this subject seems to have existed between yourself and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, to renew your intercourse with him upon it. You will express to him your hopes that the explanations which have passed between this Court and his own, may bring them to a right understanding especially if his next paper offers practicable means for that purpose, that so desirable an object being thus within view, it will be highly material that Spain should not remove that prospect to a greater distance, but be induced to depart from the exorbitant and rigid demands hitherto made by her. Besides which, it is incumbent upon France to press this upon Spain, as it is upon account of France that we are desirous to treat and conclude with Spain.

You will not fail to represent how exceedingly essential it is that the object of peace should not be retarded. The expectation of the nation is awake; the right to be informed of the state of a business so important as war or peace will undoubtedly be exercised; the wish of the country has long been for peace, at the

same time that our great naval successes and particularly the close of the campaign will not allow Great Britain to submit to a dishonorable pacification. However there are reasons which without precipitation make a speedy determination very necessary. The opening of the Parliament and a decisive line to be taken press hard for a conclusion of this very important business.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 713.*)

St. James', 23 November 1782.

No. 24.

. . . . I have seen Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval, of whose arrival you apprized me, and have fully conversed with him on the subject of the French papers. We read them over together, and he has given me such an account of his dispatch to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes as induces me to think that he made a fair representation.

I find great pains have been taken to avoid mentioning the fishery as exclusive, and the third article cautiously worded for that purpose. However, it is very desirable that it should be left entirely out, and that the French should be contented with as strong assurances of not being molested as can be given them in the King's name. These assurances on the part of His Majesty, deserve and are entitled to a reciprocity on the part of His Most Christian Majesty, and if France will not be contented with any islands but St. Pierre and Miquelon, which however should be strongly resisted, and will not consent to have the same restrictions put upon them as by the Treaty of Paris, it will at least be expected that assurances (and these authentic) should be given that these islands shall not be fortified. He said much to prove that they could not admit of much fortification, that their harbours are small, that the strengthening them in time of peace would be of no use and in time of war would not be sufficient to protect them.

The article of Africa seems easily regulated. It will be necessary that we should have Gambia as they have Senegal, and that the footing of the trade on the other parts of the coast before the last war, be ascertained and settled, either by the definitive treaty or a future arrangement.

The article of Dominica is that which is perhaps the most serious of all. The utility of that island to both nations is equal. The wood, the water and the harbour made it very material for us



to have it. It's local situation, and depriving us of the above-mentioned advantages afford strong temptations for France not to part with it. St. Vincents must at all events be restored and every effort made for Dominica. Some ideas which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval has started may make a very great variation in the West Indies as there is reason to suppose that Spain wishes to put France upon facilitating some exchange for Gibraltar by a cession of some French islands. At all events, the offers upon that subject will come from your side of the water, as it is explicitly understood that none could ever upon that subject have been made from hence.

In the East Indies, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval has been clearly and roundly told that their pretensions to a territorial revenue round Pondicherry and Karical of at least half a million sterling is not to be admitted. Besides, where is it to come from? Have we the disposal of the lands of the country powers?

Their other pretensions of settling with these country powers cannot be heard of. Some other way of allowing the French to retract and close their engagements (which they pretend to be their object) must be thought of, and he seemed persuaded that the desire of attaining these objects would not become an obstacle to the peace.

The article of commerce too, should not make part of the preliminaries, but any assurances that can be required shall be given, that immediate attention shall be paid to settle all the points which may be necessary to the convenience of both nations. In saying this I refer to the last sentence of the French article upon that head.<sup>1</sup> . . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, *no.* 3, *p.* 773.)

St. James', 4 December 1782.

No. 25.

. . . . . Altho' there are articles in the American treaty which do not agree with the instructions, yet it's being signed will I hope be accompanied now and hereafter with signal advantages, and I can assure you that you may be perfectly easy at having given

<sup>1</sup> Sa Majesté T.C. et Sa Majesté Britannique conviennent de nommer immédiatement après l'échange desdites ratifications, des commissaires qui travailleront à de nouveaux arrangements de commerce, auxquels la réciprocité et la convenance des deux nations serviront de fondement (*ibid.*, p. 699).

your consent to it at a moment when the whole might otherwise have remained without execution. . . .

(*Ibid.*, p. 827.)

St. James', 11 December 1782.

No. 28.

*Most secret and confidential.*

Your dispatches by Lauzun have been this morning received. They have been sent to the King and will be immediately taken into consideration.

It is impossible for me at this moment to enter at all upon the subject of them, the point which presses most, requiring all my attention and every possible dispatch.

I am therefore to inform you that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval's messenger returned last night. He brought three propositions.

1<sup>o</sup>. Guadeloupe and Dominica for Gibraltar, and the Spanish terms to be adjusted on the basis of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Aranda's last propositions.

2<sup>o</sup>. If to those islands St<sup>a</sup>. Lucia was to be added, Martinico should be added also provided an equivalent should be given to France for the latter in the East or West Indies.

3<sup>o</sup>. That France, if entrusted with the terms upon which peace might be made with Spain, in case that power gave up the thoughts of Gibraltar, would charge herself with the negotiation with Spain.

Under these circumstances it was the unanimous opinion of His Majesty's servants that Minorca and the Floridas should be ceded to Spain; that the Bahamas should be restored to Great Britain and the right to cut logwood under restrictions be preserved.

This proposition goes to His Most Christian Majesty by the hands of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval, and tho' it may bring on delay in the conclusion of the peace (as a messenger must go and come from Madrid) it may tend to a more satisfactory issue of this great and important business.

The dispatch necessary on this occasion makes it impossible for me to add more by this opportunity. I shall very shortly take another of writing more fully. In the mean while I can only recommend to your usual vigilance and observation to remark the effect which the immediate and plain answer to the Spanish proposals may have on all the parties concerned. I must further inform you that the great importance of Dominica in point of wood, water, and St<sup>a</sup>.

Rupert's Bay and its situation with regard to our islands, similar to that of St. Lucia respecting Martinique, make it an object which is insisted on by us in the strongest manner and considered as necessary to that equality of footing to which we have a claim in the West Indies.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 835.*)

St. James', 12 December 1782.

No. 29.

*Secret and confidential.*

I had not time yesterday to add anything to the notice which I gave you of the unanimous resolution of the King's ministers on the terms of peace to be offered to Spain upon the prospect of that Court's relinquishing the demand of Gibraltar. It will be satisfactory to you to know upon what ground this expectation is entertained, and I therefore now inform you of what has passed on this subject.

Upon the return of Mr. de Rayneval's courier, he called upon me in the evening by appointment. He then told me that the addition of St. Lucia by us to the proposed offer from France of Guadeloupe and Dominica had occasioned great surprize at Versailles and indeed created some alarm, being looked upon as an advance upon the terms which he thought he had reason to expect might be accepted, and he added that it could not but in a great measure raise suspicions of our earnestness if, when the negociation was so far advanced, fresh pretensions were set up. I reminded him that Dominica could never be considered as part of the exchange, because it must always have been looked upon as a restitution to be made from France to England. He then proceeded with stating that he had however two propositions to open to me, which are so exactly described in the paper entitled *Résumé* and herein inclosed,<sup>1</sup> that I need not specify them in this place. The import-

<sup>1</sup> *Résumé des observations faites par Monsieur de Rayneval.*

Le Roi de France, instruit de la répugnance que Sa Majesté Britannique a de céder Gibraltar, et ayant quelque lueur d'espérance de porter le Roi d'Espagne à se désister de sa résolution d'acquérir cette place, offre à l'Angleterre de faire toutes les démarches possibles pour engager ce Prince à ce désistement, mais Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne, pour avoir un moyen de réussir, demande que la Cour de Londres lui confie franchement les conditions auxquelles, dans ce cas, elle seroit disposée à faire la paix avec l'Espagne.

Si cette proposition ne convient pas à l'Angleterre, le Roi de France

ance of these propositions, and the new turn that they might give to the negotiation, led me to receive them with the greatest attention, reserving myself for the King's commands and the opinion of cabinet.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval denied being at all instructed to speak either upon what might be considered in France as an equivalent for Martinico, or what terms might be accepted by Spain.

It will doubtless occur to you that the proposal of exchanging Gibraltar for all these French islands must be attended with much difficulty. It does not much mend the former French offer because the addition of St. Lucia and of Martinico would be to be paid for by an equivalent. Where is that equivalent to be found? In the West Indies? That would counterbalance the benefit of the fresh acquisitions there. Or in the East Indies? In the cession of the Circars? And after, were Great Britain in possession of those French islands, the acquisition of a moiety of San Domingo would give France a solid, permanent establishment, a strong place of defence, and a tract of country (as it may be called) which, if well managed, would supply all their wants.

These reasons seem to make that plan, clogged with the difficulty of finding the equivalent, very ineligible.

The other proposition, exposed indeed to some delay and perhaps to refusal at Madrid, does however hold out a prospect of preserving Gibraltar, by which a great satisfaction may be given to the country, great credit accrue in the face of the world, and much weight be preserved, if well managed, with the northern nations, by such a close of the war. I yesterday communicated to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval

renouvelle l'offre de la Guadeloupe et de la Dominique pour Gibraltar, et la négociation à lier avec l'Espagne sur tous les autres objets aura pour base la note certifiée par Mo<sup>r</sup>. le Comte de Vergennes.

Enfin, si la Cour de Londres persiste irrévocablement dans la résolution d'avoir St<sup>e</sup>. Lucie, le Roi consent à faire en outre le sacrifice très pénible de la Martinique, à condition qu'on lui offrira un équivalent raisonnable dans l'une des deux Indes.

Dans cette dernière hypothèse, comme dans la seconde, la note certifiée par Mo<sup>r</sup>. le Comte de Vergennes sera prise pour base de négociation avec la Cour de Madrid.

Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne suppose que la Cour de Londres conviendra également des conditions de la paix avec les Provinces-Unies, et que cette Cour les traitera avec magnanimité, considérant les circonstances qui les ont entraînées dans la guerre (*ibid.*, no. 3, p. 849).

by a note and an enclosure to it, after having seen him, the unanimous resolution of Cabinet, of both of which I inclose copies to you. He immediately sent them off by a messenger who carries my no. 28 to you.

I hope that during the time that we are waiting for the Spanish answer the French preliminaries may be completed. The East India article still presents some difficulties, but not insurmountable, especially if the professions of France of not meaning more than commercial establishments, are at all sincere, and that they can be brought officially to declare them. Your attention in this situation will therefore principally be directed to observe the following principal points :

The temper of the American commissioners ;

The effect which the signature of the provisional articles has had upon France ;

The opinion of the French ministers upon the appearances of a war between Russia and the Porte. The issue of the intentions of the Empress and the Emperor upon that subject is very doubtful. She still depends upon his full support, and tho' it is not likely he should embark deeply in a plan so inconsistent with French politics, he has not yet undeceived her.

A repeated application has been made to me upon the topick of the mediation. The copy of the letter which I wrote to the King's ministers at the Imperial Courts which I inclose to you, will shew you how I answered it ; and I think myself warranted in saying that whatever answer is given more formally to the *insinuation verbale* will be given in concert with the belligerent powers.

For whatever insinuations France may have been suggesting in the former part of the negociation, I conceive that Court must finally share either the supposed benefit of the mediation or the blame, should there be any, of declining it.

I cannot by this opportunity answer your dispatches by Lauzun, but I will not leave them unnoticed.

I presume that the answer to the Dutch will be :

1. A confutation of their assertions in their first article, and perhaps an allowance for the present of some footing by treaty such as, for example, the Danes possess.

2. Restitution of everything but Trincomalé.

3. As little admission as possible of any pretence to indemnifi-



cation beyond what you have very properly pointed out to them : a reference to the law of nations in our tribunals.

With regard to the signature of the American treaty, you may be perfectly easy. Whatever deviations there may be in some part of it from the instructions sent out from hence, it became absolutely necessary to conclude it. Your share in that transaction cannot be disapproved, and you may be sure that every part of your conduct has been highly commended by those who from their situations are acquainted with it, and among them there is nobody sincerely applauds it or means to testify his approbation of it more than myself.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 873.*)

St. James', 18 December 1782.

No. 31.

The articles offered by the Dutch plenipotentiaries have been taken into consideration by His Majesty's confidential servants, who are of opinion that the offers which should be made to Holland as the price of peace should be

1<sup>o</sup> a renewal of the treaties subsisting with the Republic at the time of the rupture ;

2<sup>o</sup> a restitution of all the places taken from them in the war except Trincomali ; and

3<sup>o</sup> a refusal to allow the demand of indemnification made by them.

It is however, as I conceive, quite improbable that they should accept the first proposition ; the politics and temper of the Republic at this time will scarcely allow them to return to that wise system which they had so long pursued, yet if they do not intend to revert to that situation, they have not the least pretence to be allowed by this country the enjoyment of any privileges or concessions whatever beyond what the law of nations shall entitle them to. I almost wonder that they should so falsely have stated and represented the offer made to them by Mr. Fox thro' the Russian minister, and I can attribute it to nothing but to the design of paying some attention to Russia as a compensation for the contempt which they have shewn to that Court, and to an attempt to extort from us some degree of accession to the neutral code. Nothing is more plain than that the proposal made by Mr. Fox went only to this, that if the Dutch would make a separate peace

and agree to a suspension of hostilities, this country would enter into a negotiation with Holland upon the basis of the treaty of 1674, and it was expressly understood that if the stipulations on their side were not entered into, the proposal on our's was to be considered as null and *non avenue*, so that as there is no fairness in their state of this question (very unnecessarily brought forward in the first article of their demand) the conclusion drawn from and the claim founded upon it equally fall to the ground. This being the case, nothing can in any respect entitle Holland to any degree of concession on the part of His Majesty on the subject of the mode of carrying on their trade in future, but their return to that friendship, the securing of which first entitled them to the treaty itself, and the hopes of regaining which induced the offer of renewing it. If therefore they cannot be brought back to their ancient alliance with this Kingdom, they must not expect to be considered in any other light but as a nation with whom we have no treaty at all. Such is their situation with France and there is no objection, if the first proposal fails, to stipulate that the connexion between the two nations shall for the present stand on the footing of the law of nations.

If however for the sake of peace, altho' the first friendly offer should be rejected, and the second very prudent and fair proposal not be accepted, it should be necessary to come to some fixed agreement on the nature of their trade, the utmost which the King can possibly consent to is that they should be put upon the same footing as the Danes are, under the explanatory article of their treaty, of which I send you a copy, tho' you are doubtless well apprized of it.

To go farther at this time, to recognize and adopt the neutral code by any allusion whatsoever, would be giving countenance to a system big with evil and mischief. The extent to which these principles are now carried grows hourly more alarming. Russian ships from Brest to St. Mauritius, and the attempt of Portugal to bring home the treasures of South America to Old Spain, make a resistance to the neutral code highly necessary. And if peace takes place, it will be well that our Court should never have acknowledged that system. I am at the same time aware that a neutral trade, if well understood and regulated, may be fairly and openly carried on, but the present abuse of it is enormous.

At all events the first article should on the part of Holland be

no obstacle to the peace, and their acceptance of any of the three propositions relating to it, viz. a renewal of treaties, having no treaties at all, or being bound by the description of the Danish stipulations, will give them at least as much as they have any title to expect.

With regard to the second demand, they have no pretence to expect a compleat restitution of what the fate of war has deprived them. This is as ill founded in them as was the Spanish requisition in the first outset of the negotiation, of keeping everything that we had lost.

And if for the sake of peace any part of these conquests shall be kept by Spain, it will by a parity of argument be unreasonable in Holland to expect the compleat restitution which is now demanded. This reasoning is not only well founded, but may be applied with peculiar force to France if she attempts to support the propriety of the Dutch claims.

Our situation in India certainly renders the port of Trincomalé not only desirable but almost necessary to us. If the French professions are to be depended upon, however they may object to our keeping it, they pretend it can give them no umbrage, as their views in India according to their assertions do not tend to any military maintenance of their situation.

The Dutch hitherto have kept themselves masters of the navigation of the Eastern Seas ; with what consistency can they in one instance claim a free trade and in another pretend to keep an exclusive one ? It will therefore be necessary that the liberty of navigating those seas should be asked for and granted, more especially if they are allowed any privileges in carrying on their neutral trade, and in this I conceive we should be supported by France.

We are uninformed of the intentions of France respecting the Cape, and I am sure it would be highly impolitic under that uncertainty, to part with Trincomalé, which we have in our hands. Another strong reason for insisting on this is the fear of France obtaining that important post, as she has by the possession of the Cape and of Demerary and Essequibo, the means of forcing it.

With regard to the article of indemnification, so much fairness was shewn to Holland, first, in the notice of the suspension of the treaties ; secondly, in the time allowed for the security of ships, that nothing can be granted either in a comprehensive ballance or

in particular reimbursements. The law of nations and the courts which by these laws are established, are open and may be referred to.

I must take notice that the observation in the third article upon the aggression of Great Britain can serve no purpose but of controversy and acrimonious recrimination.

Having thus pointed out the principles and particulars which may form the basis of a pacification with Holland, it remains to consider the mode of conveying to them the counter propositions. I have on this subject the King's commands to instruct you to confer fully with the Dutch plenipotentiaries, and to offer them first, in conference, the different proposals in the order above described, and finally, propose such of them in writing as you may be nearest agreeing upon. This you will do as simply as possible, taking notice (however shortly in the introduction) of the fallacy of their assertions on the first article, and adverting on the impropriety of their reviving at this period of the negotiation the pretended cause of the rupture. In your conference therefore with these ministers you will in the first place directly propose to them the great advantages resulting to them by a return of friendship and true harmony with Great Britain, assuring them that in that case, any doubt of construction with regard to the treaties which have existed and will be to be renewed, shall be explained and adjusted. You will point out to them their present dependance upon France, the disordered state of their own constitution, and in short use every argument which your knowledge of their situation will suggest to you for this purpose.

If, as there is too much reason to apprehend, this friendly invitation should have no effect upon them, you will of course proceed to shew them, that Holland having gradually, tho' not slowly, thrown off all connexion with England, and having in the most open manner imaginable, avowed the utmost dislike to reunite with us, they are certainly not entitled to any provisions, privileges or favours whatever, and that therefore it is not proposed to them now to make any treaty of commerce at all with this Kingdom. At the same time you may tell them that as soon as the nations who have been engaged in this war shall begin to form such arrangements at the change which most probably must in commercial respects take place, I may say, all over the world, this country will be ready and willing to make such engagements with them

as the situation of both states and their respective interests may require.

And lastly, if peace cannot be obtained with Holland but at the price of some regulation, I repeat that His Majesty cannot concede more than the terms of the Danish treaty including the explanatory article.

What degree of success these offers will meet with I cannot pretend to judge ; you will not fail however pointing out to Messrs. Berkenrode and Brantzen that they must avoid being the obstacles to pacification, and this you will be able to press with more or less efficacy, according to the degree of support and countenance which France may give to their claims ; for I am persuaded that if France is in earnest, she will use her utmost endeavour to reconcile them to a speedy conclusion ; but on the contrary, if she is not, will avail herself of the difference between Great Britain and Holland to retard, if not break off the negotiations.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 889.*)

St. James', 19 December 1782.

No. 32.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval's messenger returned this morning, and brought word that Spain desisted from her demand of Gibraltar. I saw Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval very soon after the notice he gave me of this circumstance, and learnt from him that Count Aranda had received powers to relax on that head in consequence of the application made to His Catholic Majesty by the French King, who was convinced during every stage of the negotiation how great an obstacle the exchange of that fortress threw in the way of peace.

I further understood that the cessions which His Majesty for the sake of peace would be induced to make to Spain would be satisfactory to that power, and that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Heredia would be here in a day or two to adjust the articles relating to Spain.

As to the Dutch propositions upon which I have written so fully to you in my other dispatch of yesterday that I have nothing to add except that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval expressed very strenuous support of them from the principles of magnanimity to them ; but the argument of doing by them in retaining Trincomalé, as Spain does by keeping Minorca &c., remains unanswerable, and I cannot suppose it will be an insurmountable objection to the peace. . . . .



(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 3, p. 899.*)

St. James', 20 December 1782.

No. 33.

. . . . . It was with the greatest concern that His Majesty saw the perseverance of His Most Christian Majesty on another subject, namely Dominica, present the utmost difficulties in the way of pacification.

I am persuaded that His Most Christian Majesty will see this subject in so true a light when fully stated to him, that the principles upon which all parties mean to conclude if possible the present negotiation, will forcibly operate in favor of the King's demand.

The situation of Dominica is such that in the hands of France it becomes a possession dangerous to those of His Majesty. In the hands of Great Britain it is a defence to those possessions. Possessed by France it adds but little to their strength or to the means of falling upon the British West India islands, as St. Lucia would answer the same end; whilst in the possession of Great Britain it does not add to the means of attack upon the French islands, but only protects our own.

In that view, and considering that one great principle upon which this peace has been negotiating is a fair and liberal equality and distinction of possession, France can surely not insist upon that which takes defence from us, and gives her no great additional weight in that respect.

The port of St. Rupert is another argument in favour of Dominica being restored to His Majesty. It will be said that there are harbours at Tobago and at the Grenades, but their distant situation is such that in case of so calamitous an event as the renewal of war hereafter, the other West India islands might become the seat of it, long before any relief or assistance could come from those distant possessions.

The situation of Dominica relative to Guadeloupe cannot be urged as exposing the latter to any danger. St. Lucia as effectually protects Guadeloupe as Dominica does the British islands, and the same political principle which makes St. Lucia important to France gives consequence to Dominica with regard to Great Britain.

The port of Dominica is so much to leeward that the communication between Martinico and Guadeloupe cannot be interrupted, as the windward passage is easy, and no ship of war can cruize

there to interrupt it. The possession of Martinico in fact commands the communication with all the other islands.

With regard to smuggling, the most precise regulations may be made and the strictest observance of them enforced.

The port, the wood and water at Dominica are circumstances which we do not pretend to conceal, but on the contrary, by pointing them out, to urge that if we have any possessions in that part of the world, it is the opinion of those best able to judge that these advantages are essentially necessary to us ; and that persisting in depriving us of that fair and common advantage is in effect to say that we shall not be on that footing in the West Indies which our situation and the principles understood during the whole negotiation entitle us to claim and retain.

France cannot urge that Dominica is equally or in any degree important to her.

The value of the island as a colony is entirely out of the thoughts of either of the Sovereigns on this occasion. Greater objects occupy their attention.

The Court of France did not consider Dominica, as I said above, as so necessary to herself, when, engaged in the common cause with Spain, and inspired with a desire of forwarding a peace, that island was offered together with Guadeloupe as an exchange for Gibraltar. Here however I cannot but observe that England never considered it as part of the exchange, but persisted in claiming it as part of the restitutions which were to take place in the West Indies.

France afterwards, in the same spirit of conciliation, offer'd the alternative of charging herself with the negociation with Spain, if the latter would desist from claiming Gibraltar. What was the King's resolution ? that of his ministers ? and the answer given to France ? The proposal came from the Court of France, and the answer returned through the same channel. It was that His Majesty would leave the King of Spain in possession of Minorca, of West Florida and even of East Florida, and the same council determined that Dominica should be insisted on from France. I have His Majesty's permission to enclose you a copy of the minute. My despatch to you no. 28 states it explicitly. My note (inclosed to you in the same despatch) to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval, through whose hands the proposal above mentioned came, inclosed that part of the answer relative to Spain and distinctly added and *repeated* to

him that Dominica was an indispensable object to us. I say *repeated*, because I have constantly and consistently laid the greatest stress upon it, and I cannot give a stronger proof of it than when we were adjusting the articles together, I refused to regulate that of the West Indies, because I would not consent to put Dominica on the French side of the article. Were it necessary to carry this proof further, I could communicate to you a former resolution of the cabinet in which the article with France had been considered, and in which Dominica was indispensibly to be restored to Great Britain. I only say this to shew that the principle of preserving Dominica has, on account of the importance of it, been so fully, and I presume to add, so fairly stated, has never been departed from since it was first insisted on.

His Majesty cannot doubt but that in this view of the case, the Court of France will admit the reasonableness and the justice of His Majesty's demand of the restitution of Dominica, and not allow the possible prospect of depriving Great Britain of a means of defence, to influence the speedy conclusion of the peace.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 2, p. 485.*)

St. James', 29 December 1782.

No. 35.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Heredia brought me your letter recommending him to me, and two letters, one from Mo<sup>r</sup>. Florida Blanca and another from Count Aranda. The latter was in itself a reasonable and temperate paper, and indeed more so than usually comes from a Spanish Minister, but the object of it was to engage this Court to renounce the exercise of the right of cutting logwood, and to accept of such mode of being furnished with it as Spain was ready to propose.

The language of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Heredia was consonant to the doctrine of his principal, but both in my answer to Count Aranda and in my conversations with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Heredia, I explained the difficulty of giving up that right and gave him the most confidential proofs that we could not depart from the right, tho' willing to secure the preservation of it under certain regulations, and to that end pointed out the 16th article of the Treaty of Paris as a model, with this difference, that the Bay of Honduras might be described and the spot for an establishment be ascertained.

The other part of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Heredia's commission was to secure that stipulations of commerce shall in a given time be made.

It is certainly a delicate matter to specify any given period for this purpose. The mention of it might perhaps create an unnecessary alarm in our merchants who, tho' they want new regulations would falsly conceive that some principles were already given up. I have seen a committee of Spanish merchants, and if I may be allowed to refer to my own knowledge of the state of the trade between Great Britain and Spain and of the treaties existing between the two nations, I join in opinion with them that advantageous as these treaties are, there are perhaps points which require revision and regulation. It therefore occurs to me that if peace should be happily concluded, His Majesty would direct his representative at Madrid to lay particular stress on the execution of such part of the treaties as it will be material to preserve entire at all events.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Heredia seems to expect that the mode in which the claim to preserve an establishment at Honduras and the liberty of cutting logwood will have it's effect, and facilitate the arrangement of that part of the business.

(*Ibid.*, no. 3, p. 981.)

St. James', 29 December 1782.

No. 36.

. . . . . Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval had received his dispatches of the same date (the 24th inst.) and had communicated to me the substance of them and the resolution of the French cabinet upon the subject of His Majesty's most reasonable expectation and demand of the restitution of Dominica.

It would have been fortunate if the disposition which you saw in Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes to comply with that expectation had been unaccompanied with the very ungracious manner in which the prospect of Great Britain's recovering that possession is held out. At this period of the negotiation to clog the conclusion of it with new matter might well create a fair suspicion of the sincerity of the Court of France with regard to peace, and might certainly justify the imputation of her wanting to take advantage of the value of that island to obtain something in lieu of it.

The plainness and sincerity however with which the King has expressed himself throughout the whole course of this negotiation induces him not to protract the important business of pacification, by ordering me to reply now to all that the French minister has alledged in his dispatches to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval, but to come directly

to the point, and therefore His Majesty allows me to suggest to the French minister that the following offer might be made, and if accepted become a proposition and part of the preliminaries.

That Tobago should remain in the hands of France ;

And that in the East Indies, the Company should use their best offices to obtain for France, of the Nabob of Arcot the Pircunates of Vilanour and Bahour near Pondicherry, and of the Rajah of Tanjour the four Magans round Keral.

Or this alternative, that upon France's desisting from all pretensions to any exchange of dominion in the West Indies, a district between Alamparva and Panna round Pondicherri and Karical besides, should be obtained of the country powers. By the tenour of your letter no. 80, I should conceive the latter most likely to be accepted.

In furnishing Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval with this overture, I have repeatedly stated to him the difficulties which attend cessions of this sort in the Indies ; the districts are in effect in the hands of the country powers, and the East India Company can only exercise their influence to obtain them. An attention to that Company and its interests is highly necessary and not to be treated so lightly as a French minister falsely conceives it may. However I can venture to rely on their readiness not to obstruct the great work of peace. The obstacles and difficulty of obtaining this are not to be lessened in the conception of the Court of France, and therefore the greatest merit must be claimed in going thus far and the greatest discretion exercised in speaking of the inclination or power of the Company.

With regard to St<sup>t</sup>. Vincents, although France has expressly continued to pretend to keeping it, and that for reasons so futile in themselves as to have no weight, I cannot but hope it may not be an obstacle to peace on their part, but that on the contrary, the restitution in the West Indies may be roundly completed on both sides. The support of the Caribs is too trifling an argument to insist upon on their part, or, on ours, to reply to seriously.

The King has a full right to expect that it should be returned with the other West Indian possessions and to have that expectation stated in the strongest light. If France had given Dominica upon the reasons offered in support of the claim to it, St<sup>t</sup>. Vincents would perhaps have been an object of less importance, but as the possession of the one is to be purchased, the attainment of the other must be procured on the footing of restitution. And in con-



tending for this with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, you will omit no argument to convince him of the justice of the claim, which has been kept up in every former part of the negotiation, and as especially insisted upon in the present state of it. . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 5, p. 1.)

St. James', 1 January 1783.

No. 1.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes having with his last dispatches to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval conveyed to him a project for preliminary articles, it has been communicated to me.

It scarcely varies from that which was received on the 20<sup>th</sup> November in the form of a reply to the answer which went from hence.

The former project has been repeatedly under consideration both of myself, of the King's ministers, and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval jointly with me. Most of the articles were reduced some time ago very nearly indeed to a finished state, and so far agreed upon on the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. [*sic*] by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval and myself.

That being the case, the alterations which are inserted in the present set of propositions are nothing more than such as were made before upon full and mature consideration. And in communicating them to you I add the grounds for proposing and making the amendments in order that nothing may be wanting to shew and to prove how perfectly groundless the assertion is that any time has elapsed here without attending in the most particular manner to the great and important work of forwarding the peace. On the subject of this assertion, and every other part of his paper, I reserve myself for another opportunity, but lose no time in forwarding to you the project of preliminaries, a note explaining the alterations, and a letter accompanying my communication of the note to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval.

The fairness, propriety and reasonableness of these alterations is, I presume to say, such that I cannot conceive their being disputed in any respect with any tolerable colour of good faith, and that you may be in possession of as much information on that subject as possible, I send you a minute from the secret committee of the East India Company, and a copy of some observations drawn from it which I communicated some time ago to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval.

Those relative to the cessions in the East Indies and the time of making them are very important.

If the French are at all sincere in their professions for peace, they have in their next answer an opportunity for verifying them. If they are not, they will risque everything to break it off.

You will easily conceive how anxious I am for the return of the several messengers who are to bring to a point the various critical matters in agitation. The necessity of coming to a determination grows every instant stronger, and I have before remarked to you how unjust the language of Versailles is, that there is precipitation in this wish and this expectation.

The papers herewith sent, I mean the articles and the notes upon them, are meant to be merely preparatory, that both parties may know mutually their final intentions.

In this arduous situation I can only recommend to you that firmness and consistency which can alone resist the encroachments which the state of the negotiation and our sincere desire of peace occasions from our enemies.

I must on this point enforce as strongly as possible the position that Dominica was fairly and explicitly linked with the conditions granted with Spain, and that Spain acts with the greatest unfairness in not supporting that proposition.

I hope another instance of it will not appear in that Court's persisting to litigate the points upon which M<sup>r</sup>. de Heredia was sent over.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 5, p. 117.)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

No. 2.

I have the King's commands to transmit to you a draught of preliminary articles.

It is His Majesty's pleasure that, as they have been very maturely weighed by his most confidential servants, and are thought by them to be such as this country is entitled to obtain, you should immediately acquaint M<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes with your having received them, and present them to that minister in order to their being signed by yourself and him when agreed upon.

His Majesty entertains the most just expectation that this can meet with no difficulty.

The subject has been so fully and so repeatedly considered, and

the King's earnest and sincere desire of peace have induced His Majesty to make such concessions for the purpose of obtaining it, that it would argue the worst disposition in the other belligerent powers if they do not immediately concur in adopting the terms now proposed.

You will therefore insist in the most strenuous manner upon the compleat acceptance of these articles in their present form, not deviating from it except in immaterial instances indeed, or in the very important points which I will state fully to you in my separate dispatches of this date.

(*Ibid.*, p. 225.)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

No. 3.

I have in my dispatch inclosing the preliminaries instructed you not to depart from the articles except in very immaterial instances indeed, or in the very important points which I state to you in my other dispatches of the same date.

I will now generally inform you that the topicks relative to France and Spain upon which a degree of latitude can for the sake of peace alone be allowed you, are the exchange for Dominica, and the admission of a fixed period for future commercial arrangements, and with regard to Holland, the extent of the restitutions to be made to the Republick.

In placing this exceeding high degree of confidence in you, His Majesty relies on your utmost discretion and judgement which, upon the spot, can alone direct you in the mode of concealing from the French minister that you have such powers vested in you ; and in the exercise of them, if unavoidably necessary to make use of them, you will doubtless not give up any one article 'till possessed of the intentions of France, Spain, and Holland upon them all, considered together.

Here too I will observe that the point most seriously and explicitly to be maintained is that of not leaving the seeds of war in India. If there is faith or good intention in France, they will come into this measure, especially as their entrance into possession of territory in that part of the world, is made to depend upon the reestablishment of peace in it.

Before you enter upon this weighty and important business with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, you will not fail, in the most firm but temperate

manner, to state to him the surprize and concern which the *Rapport* communicated to you occasioned upon it's being received here. You will point out how fatal, at this or indeed at any period of a depending negotiation, such a mode of carrying it on might prove, especially if immediately retorted in a manner equally acrimonious. You will add that it is impossible however to avoid taking notice of it, and you will lay the greatest stress upon the moderation with which the inclosed minute is drawn up, which you will communicate to him.

Most anxiously hoping for your success in the great and decisive business intrusted to your care, I cannot give you greater encouragement than the approbation which has attended the share which you have had in the negotiation.

I am to inform you, and you will in a proper manner acquaint Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes with it, that the articles which are now sent to you and the powers which you have to relax on the particular points upon which you are now instructed, form the real and ultimate proposition which this Court can either make or listen to ; and that if, for the misfortune of the powers at war and mankind in general, the preliminaries are not signed now, you have instructions to quit Paris.

The only circumstance which could justify your stay there any longer in that case would be waiting for an answer from hence to the dispatches which are hourly expected.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 5, p. 237.*)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

No. 4.

*Secret and most confidential.*

The unreasonable demand of an equivalent for Dominica makes it, for the sake of peace and of securing so valuable a possession, necessary to attend to that claim. And for this purpose I have His Majesty's commands to inform you of the exchange which may be given for it, and this I will present to your view according to the several degrees in which it may be proposed.

1st. The island of Tobago ; and the eighty villages round Pondicherry and the eighty one round Karical.

2ndly. Without Tobago, a district from the river Allamparva to the river Panna, leaving the places of Permacoil and Vicaravandee out of the district ; and also the eighty one villages round Karical.

This I must observe to you is the utmost that France has ever had the least reason to expect could in any case be given up.

It is anxiously to be hoped that the avidity (for I can give it no other name) of the cabinet of Versailles will content itself with the East Indian district above mentioned and the eighty one villages round Karical.

If however, driven to increase the equivalent for Dominica without being able to keep Tobago, something must be added, there are but two propositions more which can take place, vizt.

1st. Tobago; the district round Pondicherry and Karical with fifteen villages as restored by the Treaty of Paris.

2ndly. Tobago with the district round Pondicherry and the eighty one villages round Karical.

Beyond this concession it is impossible to go, and this is the real ultimatum on this subject, which I most anxiously hope will not come into contemplation.

You have His Majesty's commands to insist on the restitution of St. Vincent's to every extent except suffering the peace to be broken off upon that account.

I inclose to you an interesting note upon St. Martin's and St. Bartholomew's in order to make what use of it you can, tho' I fear, so late in the negociation, much success upon a fresh demand is not likely.

(*Ibid.*, p. 245.)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

No. 5.

It would be with great reluctance that a consent could be given to fixing a time for abolishing the treaties of commerce between Great Britain and France, and Great Britain and Spain, whenever new ones should be concluded. This would be particularly difficult with regard to the Treaty with Spain, which is certainly as advantageous to us as any that could be expected to be made.

For this reason I have resisted as much as I have been able the various expedients which have been suggested for fixing a limited period for the duration of the treaties now in force, and it is more eligible to allow even in the preliminaries the nomination of commissioners for the purpose of regulating commercial points only, than not to mention the intention of adopting such a measure, but separately consenting to appoint a time for putting it into execution.

France complains of the inefficacy of their treaty of navigation



and commerce signed at Utrecht in 1713, but is certainly not so anxious to have our treaty with Spain altered, because the best advantages France enjoys in Spain depend upon their equality with us as the most favor'd nation.

It would therefore be exceedingly desirable that France would either give up her own expectations relative to the treaty of 1713 for the sake of preserving the advantages she holds in Spain by that of our's of 1667 or induce Spain not to insist upon the same condition of fixing a time for the duration of it.

For the present therefore, I hope the agreement to appoint commissioners will satisfy both Courts.

It is necessary to mention this circumstance in the preliminaries, if it is to be hereafter mentioned in the definitive treaty, else the latter would seem to put us on a worse footing than the former, which could not be allowed.

You will therefore offer the article as it now stands, which of itself promises that the subject shall be duly investigated without having annexed to it a condition so disagreeable as the cessation of the treaty at any given time.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 5, p. 249.)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

No. 6.

It is impossible to judge whether France is determined to make a stand in favor of the restitution of Trincomalé to the Dutch. You will employ your utmost sagacity in endeavouring to discover this, and not allow a suspicion to be entertained that this object can be given up by us.

If however for the purpose of not risking a salutary conclusion to the negotiation, you shall be perfectly convinced that Trincomalé cannot be obtained, you have His Majesty's permission to desist from that claim.

The title of possession however in our war with the Dutch, who by refusing a separate peace, and throwing themselves into the power and under the protection of France, have placed themselves in the most hostile light, gives the King some claim to keep some part of his conquests from the Republick; therefore, finding yourself obliged to desist from the demand of Trincomalé, you will insist as strenuously for keeping Negapatnam and procuring Demarary and Esequibo.

If upon the same resistance on the part of the Dutch plenipotentiaries or France, these cannot be obtained, Negapatnam alone must be insisted upon.

And finally, if Negapatnam cannot at any rate be kept, both Demarary and Esequibo are the least which can satisfy the King's just demand of retaining something from one of his enemies, while his desire of peace induces him to grant such cessions to the rest.

I conceive that if France is once convinced that the principal difficulties between Great Britain and Holland are likely to be adjusted, the signature of the preliminaries between France and Spain, which you are so well aware is the only object, will not be retarded.

The importance however of Trincomalé is so great and the expectation of keeping it is so high that nothing I am persuaded will be left undone by you to obtain so capital a point.

Being perfectly unacquainted with the resolution which the States General may take, it is impossible to furnish you with His Majesty's final commands upon the remaining articles, but I conceive that if France is in earnest to conclude the peace, Holland will be obliged to accept those which you held out to them in your memorial; and you may give the fullest assurances in that case, that nothing will obstruct the immediate arrangement with them.

However, you will take especial care that no admission of the principles of the neutral code, or allusion to it's articles can take place, but that the fairest interpretation of the well known laws of nations shall be the basis of our connection with Holland.

(*Ibid.*, p. 255.)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

No. 7.

The French messenger who was to come with the answer from Paris to the overture made of giving an exchange for Dominica is not returned. It is not however necessary to wait for his arrival, considering that no time is to be lost in bringing the important business under consideration to an issue.

If the Court of France keeps Tobago, it must be added in the preliminaries to the seventh article. If otherwise, it will, with the other West India islands, stand part of the following article which stipulates the restitutions to Great Britain.

The same is applicable to the future destination of St. Vincents.

I will not allow myself to suppose that Dominica can ever be placed but on our side of the account, after all that has passed, and after the King's consent to offer an exchange for it. So that, if the French answer agrees with the overture from hence, then, whether they keep Tobago or not, the articles relative to the West Indies are readily filled up.

On the subject of the sixteenth article relative to Hyder Ally, I trust the French will consent to it. In truth, unless they do, or by some very binding act engage to fulfill the stipulations of it, the war may continue in India.

I have in every conversation upon this subject pressed this point to the utmost, and it may really be looked upon as the test of the sincerity of France upon Indian concerns.

It has been repeatedly suggested to me that an article in which the contracting parties would invite their allies, vizt. the Indian Princes, to accede to the treaty, and further exhort them to retire to their own territories, would be sufficient, especially if accompanied by a memorial on our part explaining the expectation we should form of their not supporting Hyder Ally, which might be answer'd by another memorial in which France consents to it. But an article is so much safer, that such a method of securing the point as that abovementioned should not be resorted to but in the utmost extremity. Rather however than that the signature should fail, you may agree to a measure of this kind, which however must be so drawn up as effectually to prevent France from assisting Hyder Ally's keeping possession of these territories belonging to the Nabob of Arcot, which he has invaded, and which are absolutely confirmed to him by the Treaty of Paris.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 5, p. 199.)

St. James', 9 January 1783.

Private.

I inclose to you a note which I have signed and which will give the Court of France that security which from the first has been demanded on their part, of not being interrupted in the fishery on the Banks allotted for their temporary use in Newfoundland, and in delivering it you may assure the French Minister of the punctuality with which this engagement will be observed.

The French Court has never had reason to complain of any thing on the part of His Majesty's Governors on this subject, and when at the close of that controversy of which I sent you a precis in my no. 5, the orders which were sent out were communicated to the French Court, they were perfectly satisfied with them, and may equally be assured that they now shall contain the most positive directions agreeably to the tenor of that note.

In Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes' observations which accompanied the articles dated the 6th October he extends the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht further than the 13th article of that treaty expresses. It is impossible to agree further to this than to refer as I have done explicitly to the article itself.

I have never been able to succeed in procuring a promise that the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon should not be fortified, as little could I prevail in enforcing the restrictions of the Treaty of Paris with regard to Bengal.

It may however in some degree answer the same purpose if the paper of observations which I have herewith inclosed to you, upon being presented to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, could receive an answer to it as satisfactory as the said paper ought to have.

This being the case, I would not have it delivered without your being assured of it's being duly attended to.

If in conference with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes you should find him disposed to go even further than my paper of observations does, you will then draw up one stronger than mine, and receive his answer.

Without a certainty of this, it would be exceedingly improper to present the paper at all, as it would subject His Majesty's name to be used in forming expectations which would either not be complied with or offensively refused.

(*Ibid.*, p. 369.)

St. James', 14 January 1783.

No. 9.

. . . . . On the important article no. 16 I must in general observe that the real and only object of it is to force the retreat of Hyder Ally into his own country or to leave the East India Company at liberty to act against him if he persists in keeping possession of any part of the Carnatic, which is guarantied to the Nabob by the Treaty of Paris. An armistice therefore, which should leave

him in possession of any part of the Carnatic would be highly ineligible, therefore the nearer the article in the preliminaries can be made to agree with those especially which were sent over last, the greater the security of peace in that part of the world will be. I trust you will be able to have this point secured in the article itself; and if not, in the most explicit memorial on both sides that can be agreed upon. . . . .

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 6, p. 155.*)

St. James', 13 March 1783.

No. 38.

Altho' from several of your dispatches and from the language which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Moustier has assured me to be that of his Court with regard to the merchant planters and proprietors of the island of Tobago, there is the strongest reason to expect on the part of France great attention to their situation, yet it becomes exceedingly material that something more than such general assurances should be obtained for the preservation of those advantages which they so earnestly sollicit and which as I have in a former dispatch stated to you, will redound equally to the benefit of the government under which they will hold their possessions. The inclosed memorial states very fully the capital points which it would be very desirable indeed to insure by articles if possible either incorporated with the definitive treaty, or annexed to it as separate stipulations, or by some authentic and irrevocable instrument or declaration on the part of the French King. In a government like that of France it is difficult indeed that any thing short of a mutual stipulation should be binding, for we have had a late instance in which that Court was on the point of revoking the edicts which had been issued with regard to the Grennades after the capture of those islands.

You will observe that the principal points are:—

The exercise of religion;

The preservation of the civil constitution;

The security of tenure of proprietors in Europe;

The interests of mortgagees, &c., and the rights of succession.

With regard to the exercise of religion, the example which upon the capture of some of their West India islands in the last war, the French have seen of the perfect consistency of it with our forms of government in that part of the world, the harmony which



has prevailed between the persons of different religions, and the liberality with which toleration on both sides has been allowed, are pledges that no ill consequence can arise from so just an allowance. If the French minister should offer to insert in the article or other instrument, such allowance only as the laws of France permit and quote for a reason of not going further, the precedent of the article in the Treaty of Paris relative to Canada, you will of course answer by stating that that was all that the King could at the time of signature answer for, but that afterwards the Quebec Act positively allowed the free exercise of the Catholic religion, so that in this case France may easily enter into an engagement that the liberty asked for in this instance should be legally established. Another strong and singular reason offers itself in favor of this permission, which equally applies to all the remaining requisitions, that, in fact, all the persons inhabiting or interested in the island of Tobago are British, and that the not allowing them the free exercise of their religion is in fact offering a most preposterous violence, or leaving a great mass of subjects without any religion at all, which, besides the hardship of it upon the individuals, is the most impolitic step which an enlightened government can take.

The argument, as I said above, of all the inhabitants being British born, applies equally to the propriety of preserving as entire as possible, the original constitution of the island. I conceive indeed that great difficulties must arise here, as the French government will scarcely admit the existence of an assembly. And I should apprehend it to be almost impossible to obtain such a stipulation; yet in the attempt to obtain it, great use might be made of applying to that liberality which the Court of France so much affects, and of the smallness of the settlement, unlike any other in the circumstances which belong to it.

A great share of the evils which would arise from not obtaining a compleat continuance of the former constitution of the island would, however, be removed by a fair and liberal understanding of the next article, namely, that no limitation of time should oblige the proprietors to part with their estates, which they ought to be allowed to hold by their attorneys.

An extent of the time allowed by the preliminaries would not answer the purpose required for whenever the close of that period shall come, the old proprietors would be obliged to sell their property

to great disadvantage, and, as I stated to you in a former letter, for want of capital and enterprize, the new ones would be but bad subjects, and the cultivation of the island be abandoned instead of continuing to be improved by the present possessors if supported and protected by a liberal and well understood policy on the part of France.

With respect to the third article, the French government adopted the principle of it with regard to the Grenades, and there cannot be a doubt but that British proprietors, under these circumstances, would be better and more useful tenants and subjects to France than any other set of men.

The requisition of being allowed to transport the slaves, which is in fact contrary to the practice of the French islanders, may at first sight create an apprehension of an intention in the British planters to remove them altogether to some other islands; but these are arguments to evince that it is not for this purpose that this request is set up. One of the first laws made by the government in the ceded islands was to make slaves a part of the real estates. They are in fact the most valuable part, and had this not been the case, the credit could never have been procured by which alone the estates could be cultivated.

At all events, it will be material that under the word *effets* in the article where an allowance for the sale or removal of them is mentioned, slaves should be comprehended.

Mortgagees are indirect proprietors in the island, and their property should be equally secured and sacred, for which reason the fourth clause is inserted.

If France should insist upon putting mortgagees upon the footing of the French law, this ought not to relate to any mortgages already made which, besides being subject to the English law in future proceedings, must always refer to the original papers and documents. And all that France can with any colour of equity pretend to on this subject is that, in all future cases only, the French proceedings should be adopted.

The fifth clause speaks for itself. Without it, considering the state of the island, the proprietors, all British, many, nay, most of them are resident here, the greatest injustice would take place. The present proprietors would have only a life estate in the property for which they have actually paid.

These arguments in support of the several points relative to the

persons now concerned in the island of Tobago will be still farther explained to you by the gentlemen who are deputed by them to go over to France, and I trust they will have such weight as to be adopted by the French government upon principles of good policy, liberality, and justice.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 6, p. 189.*)

St. James', 13 March 1783.

No. 41.

I inclose to you a copy of the answer given by the Empress of Russia to a proposal made by the King of Sweden for a congress in order to establish the extension of the neutral code.

Although Her Imperial Majesty did not enter fully into the idea which was suggested to her, yet the main object does not appear to have been out of her mind, and it remains to be seen how much this favourite point may be a temptation to her to take some part in the close of the definitive treaty.

By advices from Vienna I learn that the offer made from the Bourbon Courts, accompanied by that which necessarily attended it on the part of this Court, was but coolly received. And no answer at all, as I understand, was given or offered, under pretence of waiting for the accounts from Russia.

With regard to the neutral code, it is certain that the extent of the war began to render it in some degree usefull even to ourselves, and in case of the continuation of the war it might have become necessary to have adopted some of the principles of it. It is however with satisfaction, that hitherto they have in no shape been admitted, for it would indeed have been painfull in the greatest degree to have seen the naval stores of all our enemies go through the Channel, and the resources of Spain cross the Atlantic upon neutral bottoms.

The language which I invariably held to the ministers of those Courts that would have been accessary to this system, so highly detrimental to this country, was, that it ought to be resisted or reduced to a fixed and more inoffensive mode of being carried on, but that it was impossible to accede to or even connive at it, in its present extent.

Indeed, if the troubles in the East encrease, the Imperial Courts themselves will be the first to cry out against the maxims which they have endeavoured to establish.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 8, p. 137.*)

CHARLES JAMES FOX, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
TO FITZHERBERT.

St. James', 11 April 1783.

No. 45.

. . . . . It is His Majesty's pleasure that you should continue to hold the same language which you have done in regard to Trincomalé, which the French are undoubtedly bound to restore to His Majesty as well by the spirit as by the letter of the preliminary articles, whatever may be the future destination of that place. At the same time that you press this point, which appears to me to be really material, you will not fail to repeat the assurances which I directed you to make in my last letter of the disposition of His Majesty's ministers to adhere most scrupulously to every point (as well respecting the States General as the other late belligerent powers) upon which His Majesty's Royal word can be supposed to have been pledged. And in order that this principle may be adhered to with the utmost exactness, I wish you would explain to me what appears to you, Sir, to be the present state of the business with respect to the intended peace with Holland; for although I have read all the correspondence relating to the peace with utmost attention, I confess I do not clearly understand how far we are engaged to the Court of Versailles for the terms to be offered to the States General. There is in the office a short sketch of preliminaries with the Republick in your hand-writing, but what I wish to know is, how far great Britain on the one hand is engaged to make the concessions mentioned in that paper, and France on the other to desist from supporting their ally in farther demands. . . . .

GEORGE MONTAGU, 4th DUKE OF  
MANCHESTER

1783

ON the signature of the preliminaries, diplomatic relations were resumed by the appointment of ambassadors between the two Courts, and custom and politeness required the appointment of a man of high rank for the purpose. Manchester, being a friend of Fox, was not unnaturally appointed, but his work was intended to be rather ornamental than useful. It was however prolonged more than was anticipated, and, as will be seen there were serious subjects of debate before peace was signed on 3 September. During the first few weeks of his embassy, Manchester could rely on the assistance of Alleyne FitzHerbert, and later of GEORGE MADDISON, who was appointed secretary to the embassy in April, but who died in Paris a week before the signature of the definitive treaty. There is an account of Manchester in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 6, p. 293.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GEORGE, DUKE OF MANCHESTER, APPOINTED  
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE  
MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 23 April 1783.

Whereas preliminary articles between Us and Our good brothers the Most Christian and Catholick Kings were signed on the 20th of January last at Versailles by Our Minister Plenipotentiary and the respective Ministers Plenipotentiary of Our said good brothers ; and whereas it has been mutually agreed to send persons of rank as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary to each Court reciprocally, We, reposing the highest trust in your



prudence, experience, and abilities, have thought proper to appoint you to be Our Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Our said good brother the Most Christian King, and to give you the following instructions for your guidance in this most important commission.

Art. 1<sup>st</sup>. You are upon the receipt of these Our instructions and your letters of credence together with Our full powers and all other papers relative to the important negotiations We have entrusted to your care, to repair to Dover, where you are to embark for Calais, from whence you are to proceed with all convenient speed to Versailles . . . . . respective dominions.

2. You shall in like manner . . . . . friendship for her.

3. You are likewise to make suitable compliments . . . . . other crowned heads.

4. Among the papers relative to the important commission with which you are intrusted, you will find one entitled *Projet du traité définitif &c.* delivered by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval into the office of Our Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the copy of a counter-project and of a despatch to M<sup>r</sup>. FitzHerbert. The latter of these papers explains so fully the several articles of the counter-project and the difference between that paper and the *projet* which was delivered by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval abovementioned, that you will consider the contents of that despatch as the rule for your conduct in your conversations with the French Minister, in case there should exist any matter still unsettled on your arrival at Paris. But if you shall find that the terms of the counter-project (which do not vary in any essential point from the stipulations in the preliminary articles signed on the 20th January last) shall be accepted, you are in that case, in virtue of Our full power, to conclude and sign the definite treaty with the Plenipotentiary of Our said good brother.

5. We have already ordered the project of a definitive treaty with Spain to be sent to Our Minister plenipotentiary at Paris, copy of which will be delivered to you with these Our instructions, and that part of the beforementioned despatch from Our Principal Secretary of State which relates thereto, you will consider as the rule for your conduct in your negotiations with Our good brother the Catholick King's Plenipotentiary, and We rely on your zeal and activity in completing this important business.

6. You are also furnished with Our full power for concluding

a treaty of peace with the States General of the United Provinces. The papers which will be delivered to you with these Our instructions will shew you the state of that negotiation. We have reason to believe that the Plenipotentiaries of the Republick have received orders to desist from the pretensions that had been formed by the Republick, and which have so long delayed all farther progress in this negotiation ; and you will receive from Our Principal Secretary of State Our farther instructions on this business which We are very desirous should be concluded with as little delay as possible.

7. Whereas Our Royal Predecessor . . . . . your own house.
8. If you shall learn . . . . . set at liberty.
9. You shall insist in Our name . . . . . definitive treaty.
10. You shall carefully observe . . . . . publick peace.
11. You are during your residence in France to use your best endeavours to procure as exact an account as may be of the countries under the dominion of the Most Christian King, together with the most accurate account that you can obtain of the fortifications and state of defence of the same, as also of the number and present condition of the French forces by sea and land, and of the means the Most Christian King may have for augmenting the same on occasion. You are likewise to endeavour to inform yourself as accurately as possible what are the ordinary expences of government, and what is the amount and state of the revenue, from whence it arises, and what resources the Court of France may have for levying any, and what, extraordinary supplies. You are further to procure an account of the state and nature of the commerce carried on in the different parts of the Most Christian King's dominions, and also of their several manufactures, and particularly of the state of population throughout the said countries. On these heads you are from time to time as opportunity shall offer, to transmit, for Our information, the fullest and clearest accounts you shall be able to procure, by separate letters confined to these matters only, to Our Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and you may be assured that your particular diligence and attention to the punctual execution of these orders will not fail to recommend you to Our Royal favour.
12. You shall carefully maintain . . . . . affairs in Europe.
13. You shall protect and countenance . . . . . make to you.
14. You shall constantly correspond . . . . . respective negotiations.

15. You will in general be extremely attentive . . . . Their Most Christian Majesties.

16. Of all matters you shall be . . . . observe accordingly.

(*P.R.O., S.P. 27, no. 6, p. 317.*)

FOX TO MANCHESTER.

St. James', 30 April 1783.

No. 2.

I am commanded by His Majesty to transmit to Your Grace a copy of Mr. FitzHerbert's dispatch no. 40 which will enable you to form a clear idea of the state of the negociation between this country and the Republick of Holland.

His Majesty has heard with great satisfaction that the French ministry seem to acquiesce in the true and fair interpretation of the 19th article of the preliminaries as applied to Trincomalé and any other places which the fortune of war may have thrown into the hands either of the Most Christian King or of His Majesty, and it is his pleasure that Your Grace should propose to Mr. de Vergennes to concert instructions upon that subject to be sent by the two Courts to their respective commanders in India. I have no doubt but that minister must see the great room there will be for cavils and disputes unless this matter be rightly understood. For instance if it should be settled in our treaty with the States General that we should retain Negapatnam and that possession should be in the hands of France, it must be understood that France is to restore it to us, because otherwise the States General might refuse to restore it upon their construction of the treaty, in which case Great Britain would infallibly consider all the other stipulations made upon the ground of Negapatnam's belonging to her as void, and consequently the war would be renewed.

With respect to the equivalents thought of for Negapatnam, I do not find that either Sumatra or the relinquishment of the Dutch factory at Surat are considered by the E. I. Company as objects of any importance, nor do I see any means by which they can gain their favourite point of Negapatnam unless they would give up Trincomalé (which they certainly will not do) or could persuade the French to restore us Tobago, in which case the claim to Negapatnam may be abandoned. If Your Grace should see any opening for an adjustment of this kind, it is His Majesty's pleasure that you should use your utmost efforts to bring it about. The

recovery of Tobago is an object which His Majesty has much at heart, on many accounts, but particularly upon that of the great inconvenience and distress which so many of his faithful subjects must unavoidably suffer from it's cession. If therefore you should perceive the least inclination in the French ministry to enter into any discussion relative to this island, you are to improve that inclination to the utmost, whether it should be with a reference to Negapatnam or to any article in the French preliminaries.

(*Ibid.*, p. 331.)

St. James', 30 April 1783.

No. 5.

. . . . . The reasons which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes assigns for hastening the signature of the definitive treaty are very cogent, and there is but too much reason to think that his apprehensions of the mediating powers intending to embarrass the treaty with new and foreign matter are well founded.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Marcoff's appointment was certainly made with this view, and I have reason to think that it will be proposed to introduce the new maritime code into the body of the treaty. I really think that it is no more the interest of your Court than it is of this to admit such an embarrassment into a treaty to which they wish a speedy conclusion ; and I cannot help flattering myself that the French ministry will act in concert with Your Grace for the purpose of evading, if possible, but at all events warding off such a proposition. The unreasonableness of introducing into a treaty of peace matters entirely foreign, at the instance of two powers who have been in no wise instrumental in bringing about the peace in question is so glaring that it needs no comment, nor can Your Grace want topics of argument to resist it. Your only difficulty will consist in doing it in such a manner as not to displease, or to displease as little as possible, the two Imperial Courts and particularly that of Petersburg. It may be proper to take this opportunity of apprising Your Grace that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Marcoff, though charged in this instance, as we suspect, with a commission of no friendly nature, has yet the character of being a very fair man, and much disposed to Great Britain. If our accounts do not deceive us, Her Imperial Majesty has no subject who is more convinced than this minister of the true interest of Russia lying in a close and intimate connection with this country. The ideas of his

colleague at Paris are said to be very different. You will therefore naturally converse with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Marcoff as confidentially as the nature of your business will allow, and if Your Grace upon further acquaintance should find his dispositions to be such as I have represented them, you will undoubtedly cultivate and improve them to the utmost. An intimate connection, or if possible a strict alliance with the Northern Maritime Powers of Europe is the obvious and rational system for this country, and more especially as long as the Bourbon Family Compact continues to be in force. . . . .

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 27, no. 6, p. 363.)

St. James', 2 May 1783.

No. 8.

I am commanded by His Majesty to transmit to Your Grace a project for a treaty with the States General. Although it would have been in my power to have sent you a mere ultimatum something sooner, yet it was thought upon the whole a more expeditious way of proceeding to send you at once a project in which of course the ultimatum is contained.

The most regular and methodical way of explaining to Your Grace the spirit in which this paper has been drawn will be to consider it article by article.

The preamble is a matter of form and drawn conformably to that proposed for the French and Spanish treaties.

The articles 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, and the separate articles are likewise in the same description.

In the second article the Treaty of Westminster<sup>1</sup> and no other is renewed. The reason of this is that the different situations in which the two countries *now* stand in respect to each other make the other treaties inapplicable to the present juncture. It is supposed on one hand that the Republick would not consent to the renewal of the alliance formerly subsisting nor is it reasonable to expect on the other that when the alliance no longer exists, Great Britain should consent to renew the advantageous terms which were given to the Republick in point of commerce in the marine treaty of 1664. The Treaty of Westminster has two material points in it, the one the ascertaining of the Dutch right to Surinam, the other the acknowledgement of the superiority of

<sup>1</sup> Of 1674.



the British flag, and is therefore thought the most proper to be renewed. It does not contain any matter objectionable upon the ground above hinted at with respect to the other treaties, unless the renewal of the former treaties in this Treaty of Westminster should be so construed; and it appears to me that any mischiefs arising from such a construction will be obviated by the exception in the end of this article and the words of the next.

The third article is in effect an abrogation of all subsisting agreements between the two countries relative to their trade and navigation, and is no more than after all that has happened we have a right to insist upon. I have no doubt but the offer which I made in His Majesty's name when I was last in office will again be brought forward and urged perhaps as an argument *ad hominem* to me; but the fallacy of this way of reasoning is evident. When the offer was made last year it was a view to a separate peace with Holland from hopes (whether well or ill founded) that peace once obtained with the Republick, the war might be so concluded as to entitle us to more advantageous terms of peace with the other belligerent powers; but when the States General thought proper to refuse this liberal offer, and consequently drove us to the necessity of standing all the hazards to which we were exposed during the last campaign, it is surely ridiculous to expect that, when the danger is over without any thanks to them, we should now be content to pay a price which was then offered for the sake of avoiding those perils which we have since escaped. Besides, it would be a great and unreasonable discouragement to all liberal proposals for the sake of peace, if the proposer were considered as bound to an offer, even tho' rejected by the power to whom it is made. It may not be amiss in the discussion of this article to hint at the different light in which we consider the business of the Republick unconnected, and an ally of France.

The fifth article relates to Negapatnam which they are very unwilling to part with. If they should offer Demarary and Essequebo as an equivalent, it is His Majesty's pleasure that you should take it *ad referendum*, as we have not yet sufficient information of the value of these settlements to give an opinion upon them; but it is not improbable but I may in a very few days be able to transmit to Your Grace His Majesty's directions for your conduct upon the supposition of such a proposal being made. It may be proper at all events if they lay great stress (as I know they

will) upon Negapatnam, to declare your willingness to negotiate upon the subject and to ask them what equivalent they, or their allies for them, have to propose. With regard to those which have hitherto been thought of, Your Grace is sufficiently instructed in my despatch no. 2.

With regard to the latter part of the article which relates to the Eastern seas I am commanded by His Majesty to acquaint you that he can not consent to any alteration in it whatever. And as there are points both insisted upon in Mr. FitzHerbert's paper, it is not reasonable to suppose that your Court will support the States General in any opposition to them otherwise than by what they term their *good offices*.

The sixth article is inserted in order to support that construction of the 19th article of the preliminaries which is mentioned in my despatch no. 2.

The seventh article is inserted at the desire of the African company and is, as they alledge, necessary to prevent the arbitrary conduct of the Dutch upon the Gold Coast, who used to prevent the Portugueze tobacco from Brazil from going into any of the English ports in that country.

I have now furnished Your Grace with all the material observations that occur to me upon the articles of this treaty. The King concurs with His Most Christian Majesty in wishing that it may be signed at the same time with the other definitive treaties; but if the Dutch plenipotentiaries should not be empowered to consent to terms so just and reasonable, it is His Majesty's opinion and desire that the treaties with the other belligerent powers should suffer no delay on this account, and it is to be hoped that the Most Christian King's earnestness for the conclusion of the definitive treaties of peace will induce him to entertain similar sentiments.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 8, p. 697.)

St. James', 15 May 1783.

No. 17.

I am just informed by Sir Henry Fletcher that the East India Company have advices that Negapatnam is abandoned and ordered to be blown up.

Your Grace will immediately perceive the necessity of keeping this intelligence secret, which I believe may easily be done as I do not find that it has transpired here. This event will undoubtedly

make a considerable change in the manner we are to treat with the States General, for, as on the one hand it will be absurd to stipulate for the keeping of the place under the present circumstances, so on the other, great care must be taken that we do not engage to restore it in the state it was when taken. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 6, p. 409.)

St. James', 20 May 1783.

No. 19 [in cypher].

Since I last wrote to Your Grace I have intelligence that there is some disposition in the States-General to give Demary in exchange for Negapatnam. After the information which I conveyed to Your Grace in my last number, you will easily conceive that such an arrangement would be very desirable on our part. If therefore such a proposal should come from them you will not take this *ad referendum* as you were desired to do before, but close with it immediately, and you may possibly have an opportunity of suggesting the idea yourself upon the ground of shewing His Majesty's desire to accommodate the Republic upon a point which seems to be so dear to them as Negapatnam. I have mentioned Demary only because that colony alone under the present circumstances would be a good equivalent for Negapatnam, but if Essequibo could be added to it, it would be much better, and therefore it would be prudent for Your Grace always to mention them together as if dependent one upon the other. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 9, p. 253.)

St. James', 10 June 1783.

No. 26.

. . . . . With respect to the 5th article, I am afraid the words of the preliminaries will not bear you out in insisting upon further toleration than what is implied by extension of the time for the emigration, and this article must therefore be agreed to.<sup>1</sup>

In regard to the 6th article, I have the honour of sending Your Grace a map of the logwood coast, and also a copy of a letter from the settlers of Honduras to the Governor of Jamaica. You will still persist in asking for Rio Mullino as the southern boundary, and if this is denied, in asking at least for leave to cut wood upon *Manatee lagoon*, but I am not sanguine about obtaining either,

<sup>1</sup> Time for emigration of Protestants from the Floridas.

and at all events you must agree, because if you do not, we shall be wholly in their power. You will of course also try *Río Hondo* to the north, but if none of these can be obtained, you must insist upon a depth in the country of at least thirty leagues, as the coast between the two rivers Nuevo and Beliz is not more than fifteen leagues, though at first represented by them as twenty. I send inclosed to Your Grace a copy of a private letter which I received from the Count d'Aranda upon this subject in order to give Your Grace every light possible. From this letter as well as from my conversation with Mo<sup>r</sup>. del Campo I own I am inclined to think that it will be difficult to persuade them out of the boundary of the two rivers.

The 11th article must be given up if the Spanish ambassador insists upon it, as it is not warranted by the preliminaries, nor do I think it very material.<sup>1</sup>

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 9, p. 269.*)

St. James', 10 June 1783.

No. 27.

. . . . . His Majesty . . . . . entirely approves of the language which Your Grace and M<sup>r</sup>. FitzHerbert have held to the Russian ministers. The great importance of the points contained in the new maritime code is in itself a sufficient excuse for not consenting to introduce it into a business which ought to be finished without delay. I shall write to Petersburg to take care that any impressions the French minister may have made in our disfavour from what has passed upon this matter may be done away if possible, and in the mean time you may certainly be justified in asserting that it was equally understood by all parties at the time that the intervention of the Imperial Courts was requested, that no new matter was to be introduced into the treaty.

(*Ibid., no. 6, p. 581.*)

St. James', 30 June 1783.

No. 32.

. . . . . With respect to the Dutch proposals, His Majesty can not but lament that after so long a delay the ministers of the Republic should have made no further progress in the business. It is idle to suppose that after what was agreed between France

<sup>1</sup> Spanish works before Gibraltar.

and this Court to be a fair ground for peace at the time of the signature of the French preliminaries, that we should make any farther concessions or give better terms than their ally has stipulated for them.

The equivalents proposed for Negapatnam are wholly inadmissible, and till that point is settled it is useless to enter into the discussion of the less important matters. It should be put fairly to these ministers to know what they mean ; they can hardly intend to recommence a war, and if they do not, and the armistice is to continue, we are at present in the very situation in which we desire to be by the peace. The French ministry is bound no longer to wait for them when we have offered to them the terms agreed upon. I am convinced Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes will not deny this ; and therefore I should hope the definitive treaty may be signed shortly, and the Dutch may afterwards go on with their own business at their leisure.

It is with great reluctance that I hold this language with regard to a power between whom and this country I should always wish to see the strictest friendship, but things are so situated at present that I am convinced that any concession to the Republic at this moment would rather tend to bind them still closer to France than to disengage them from her. It is my opinion therefore that you can not speak too roundly to the Dutch plenipotentiaries upon this matter preserving always that civility and decorum which there can be no danger of Your Grace's ever forgetting, and which in treating from one state to another ought never to be omitted. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 9, p. 413.)

St. James', 2 July 1783.

No. 34.

The project inclosed in Your Grace's dispatch no. 17 for a definitive treaty with the Court of Spain has had the fullest consideration, and has met with His Majesty's entire approbation except in that article which relates to the logwood. I am sorry to say that the difficulties in regard to that article appear to me to be exceedingly grave, and such as will require all Your Grace's ability and attention to surmount. The boundaries, though narrower than one could wish, are such as Your Grace was undoubtedly authorized to agree to, and must therefore stand as they are ; but the latter part of the article which stipulates for His Majesty's



subjects abandoning within [a] limited time all other places in that part of the world can by no means be admitted. In the first place, the article as it now stands is so loosely worded that the part of the world which they are to quit is totally undefined, and Jamaica itself might, strictly speaking, come within it. But what I suspect to be particularly aimed at is the Mosquito shore, where there are settlements of great importance which have never been mentioned in the course of this business and which therefore I do not see how we are bound to give up. As there was nothing in the preliminaries nor in the public correspondence that led me to expect any thing like these stipulations, I own I was a good deal surprised as well as concerned when I received the first notion of them from Your Grace's dispatch no. 15, but this was fully explained to me when I saw Mr. FitzHerbert, who says he has understood all along that we were to quit the Mosquito shore and all other places on that part of the continent. He referred me at the same time to a private letter from Lord Grantham to the Count d'Aranda of which there is no copy in my office. Under these circumstances it will be very difficult for Your Grace to prevail upon the Spanish Ambassador to leave out the exceptionable part of the article. It may be more practicable possibly to engage him to insert the words *qui reconnoissent la domination espagnole* or *où la domination espagnole est reconnue* after the mention of those places which His Majesty's subjects are to quit. This may do tolerably well unless it leads to a disagreeable explanation, because I do not understand that we have ever recognized the Spanish right to the Mosquito shore, and the Indians of that name have constantly refused all submission to Spanish authority. Another mode may be to omit the whole article for the present and to [de]fer the settling of the logwood business to the term mentioned in the preliminaries, that is to say, six months after the ratification; and perhaps this may be the most eligible method of all, for although with regard to the logwood district we are wholly in their power, yet I am informed that with respect to the Mosquito shore it is far otherwise, and that this latter is much the more considerable object of the two. As no mention was made of it in the Treaty of Paris nor in the preliminaries, Your Grace must easily conceive how very loth His Majesty's Ministers must be to make a concession of this importance for the first time under the general words used in the latter part of the article. Your Grace, as Mr. FitzHerbert informs

me, has in your possession a copy of Lord Grantham's private letter to Count d'Aranda which may possibly throw some lights upon this matter which I am unable to give you ; but I own I can see nothing in the preliminaries or in that part of the correspondence which is in my office which can justify our admission of the words in question. Before I leave the subject of this article, I must just mention to you that it is of infinite importance that the logwood cutters should have leave to inhabit a very small island near the shore called sometimes *Casino* and sometimes *S' George's Quay*, the shore of the continent being so infested with flies and so unwholsome that they can not live there with any tolerable convenience. There is also another little island called the *Southern Triangle* where they must have leave, as they say, to heave down their vessels. They alledge that there is no other place thereabouts proper for this purpose. These two points, which can not be important to the Spaniards, they consider as essential to them, and for that reason as well as from the Chev. del Campo's conversation I should hope they would be admitted without difficulty if the other principal matter could be adjusted.

If the business of this sixth article can be so settled either by the correction of it as abovementiond or by the total omission of it or otherwise, so as not to imply any intention of evacuating the Mosquito shore, it is His Majesty's pleasure that Your Grace should declare yourself ready to sign the definitive treaty with the Court of Madrid.

Your Grace by being on the spot must be the best judge, but I cannot help suggesting that it may be expedient to explain to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes our difficulties upon the above point, and to endeavour to engage him to perswade the Spanish Ambassador to some reasonable accomodation. This may be the more easily effected when you are perfectly agreed with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes himself, which I have little doubt of being so almost immediately. I repeat again however that Your Grace yourself must be the best judge of the expediency of this plan.

This appears to me to be hardly a moment to expect any gratuitous concession from Spain, but Mr. FitzHerbert has a notion that it would be very difficult to perswade that Court even now to relinquish to us so much of East Florida as lies to the North and North East of Cape Cagnaveral which was the boundary proposed by the Spanish Ambassador. This notion is founded upon

an opinion that the Court of Spain does not wish to be an immediate neighbour to the United States and may possibly have something in it. It would be a great object to us if it could be obtained, not so much for any view of national advantage to be derived from it as for the sake of the numerous and unfortunate emigrants from Georgia who have settled in that part of the province and who must be driven to despair by a second removal. I need say no more to interest Your Grace upon this subject, upon which you will no doubt feel the ground, but I own I much fear that the present moment (on account of the contents of this dispatch) is far from affording a favourable opportunity.

It is with great satisfaction that I conclude this letter with signifying to you His Majesty's entire approbation of your conduct in this negotiation, and in particular his great satisfaction at the manner in which the 18<sup>th</sup> article of the French and the 9<sup>th</sup> of the Spanish treaty are now agreed to be understood.<sup>1</sup> This appears to me to be of infinite importance and is what both from conversation with Lord Grantham and from Mr. FitzHerbert's correspondence I had totally despaired of accomplishing. . . . .

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 9, p. 553.*)

St. James', 10 July 1783.

No. 36.

. . . . . With regard to the permission requested by the French to cut wood at Newfoundland for building their huts and repairing their boats, there is no great objection to comply with the desire of the Court of France provided their people are confined to that part of the coast of Newfoundland which is opposite to their own fishery. It is reasonable to expect that in return for this facility on our part in a matter so very essential to the convenience and advantage of their fishery, Mr. de Vergennes may be prevailed upon to use his utmost endeavours with the Spanish Ambassador on the subject of the 6th article of the Spanish project.<sup>2</sup> . . . . .

(*Ibid., p. 625.*)

St. James', 20 July 1783.

No. 40.

His Majesty was pleased to refer the contents of Your Grace's dispatch no. 24 together with every thing else relating to the 6th

<sup>1</sup> On renewal of commercial relations.

<sup>2</sup> On the Mosquito Shore.

article of the Spanish treaty to his confidential servants who have taken the whole business into their most serious consideration. They see with great concern that Lord Grantham's private letter to the Comte d'Aranda, the whole tenour of the negotiation while in the hands of Lord Shelburne and Lord Grantham, the manner in which Mr. FitzHerbert seems uniformly to have understood the business, and Your Grace's acquiescence in the article proposed, have made it almost out of the question to hope that the Spanish minister will so far relax as to acquiesce in the idea of our keeping our settlements on the Mosquito shore. By expressing their concern upon this occasion they do not mean to imply the smallest blame upon Your Grace. You were certainly led to agree to the latter part of the article from what appeared to you all at Paris to have been agreed to all through the business; but you will not wonder on the other hand that to His Majesty's servants here, who were not in possession of Lord Grantham's private letter, and who were naturally very solicitous to make no concessions beyond those to which they were compelled by the words of the preliminaries, and who saw neither in those preliminaries, nor in the correspondence, any reason to expect the clause in question; you will not wonder, I say, that this part of the article should be as unpalatable as unexpected. It is true indeed that in the Spanish project sent over hither there is the objectionable clause, but as it was agreed to work upon my project and not upon the Spanish one, that paper was very little attended to nor considered as of any moment. Under all these circumstances their determination was to advise His Majesty, and His Majesty in consequence of their advice has been graciously pleased to command me to instruct Your Grace to use every effort in your power to prevail upon the Spanish Ambassador to conclude and sign the treaty without the sixth article leaving the business of the said article to be decided within six months of the ratification of the treaty, according to the words of the fourth article of the preliminaries; but in case of your failing in this effort, rather to sign the treaty with the sixth article as it now stands (the word *Espagnol* being inserted) than to delay any longer the conclusion of this business. I am sure I need not point out to Your Grace the necessity of using every effort before you come to this alternative, so very disagreeable in every light, and in some points of view possibly dangerous to the duration of peace. What has principally induced His Majesty's

ministers to consent to this very unpleasant article is an opinion that it will still be competent to them to enquire whether the Mosquito shore be really a part of the *continent espagnol* or not, and consequently that it will still be open for their consideration whether the Mosquito shore settlements are to be abandoned or not. I mention this in order to put Your Grace upon your guard against any explanation either in conversation or otherwise which might in any degree preclude or prejudice this future question. Perhaps it might be expedient to declare on our part that we do not mean by this article to give any greater extent to the Spanish dominion in America, than the Crown of Spain has been entitled to by former treaties; I say *perhaps* this would be expedient, because tho', if such a declaration could be accepted silently, it would certainly answer a good purpose, yet on the other hand, if it were to bring on further discussions and explanations at this moment, it would undoubtedly be very mischievous. Upon this point therefore I must entirely trust to Your Grace's discretion, who must be able to judge better upon the spot of a point like this than we can do here. Upon the main point your instructions are clear and specific to use every effort to omit the article; but if those efforts are vain, to sign it as it stands. I am still in hopes from Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval's note that the points of Casino and the South Triangles may be obtained, especially as we give up in the main point. If the Spanish Ambassador refuses to insert these in the article, he may possibly give us these indulgences in a *note ministérielle*. I really believe they are material as far as any of this logwood business is so. If in mentioning the islands in the latter part of the article, the words were *dépendantes du susdit continent espagnol* instead of *dépendantes du dit continent*, it would be better, but it is not an alteration of importance enough to be worth much contention. . . . .

(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 6, p. 775.)

St. James', 4 August 1783.

No. 44.

. . . . . I believe he [Vergennes] is a little disconcerted at the very cold manner in which I have received here all the proposals which have been made to me by the French Ambassadour for co-operating with the Court of Versailles in the Turkish business. I should long since have communicated to Your Grace what passed



upon that subject, if I had not thought that it would be an advantage to you, if applied to by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, to have it to say that the whole Eastern business was a point upon which you had no instructions nor information from hence. The two reports now circulating in Europe and which are so contradictory one to the other, one importing that we are engaging with Russia, the other that we are acting conjointly with France, are equally without foundation. The latter in particular ought to be contradicted as industriously as it is propagated. You will not fail of doing this upon the first opportunity to the Russian ministers, and of talking to them that friendly language which is suitable to the desire which His Majesty has invariably manifested of cultivating the friendship of the Empress. . . . .

(*Ibid.*, no. 7, p. 360.)

St. James', 4 October 1783.

No. 58.

. . . . . In regard to Dutch affairs, Mr. Storer will have informed Your Grace that a confidential person is going to Holland in order to make some inquiries into the real state of the government of that country, and till further information is received here, His Majesty's wish is that matters should remain in the precise state in which they are. In this view everything Your Grace has said as well as every step you have taken has been particularly fortunate, and it is impossible to wish any thing different from what has been. I do not know whether I mentioned to Your Grace in any former dispatches that there is the greatest reason to think that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Brantzen has been extremely false in every friendly expression he has thrown out to Your Grace. We have even good ground to believe that in his dispatches he has cautiously avoided mentioning any thing kind and conciliatory that has at any time fallen from Your Grace, and that, if it had not been for the honesty of his colleague, it would not have been authentically known in Holland that so much as a civil expression, much less any tender of friendship and any ancient connection had ever been made by Your Grace. I say this in order to put you on your guard, though I do not think there is likely at present to be any thing important pass between Your Grace and that minister. . . . .

Mo<sup>r</sup>. Simolin has this day shewn me a letter from Mo<sup>r</sup>. Markow which tallies very exactly with Your Grace's account of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de

Vergennes's language upon Eastern affairs. The Empress is undoubtedly at this moment as much dissatisfied with France as she is on the contrary pleased with the friendly conduct of this country. How far it will be in our power to improve this disposition to any solid and useful connection remains to be proved. It is no doubt an object which we ought to pursue with zeal and assiduity and to which I am sure Your Grace will contribute your part with your usual ability and earnestness.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 7, p. 485.*)

St. James', 1 November 1783.

No. 63.

. . . . In regard to the affairs of Holland, I am to acquaint Your Grace that a confidential person having been sent to The Hague in order to make some necessary inquiries, and particularly to ascertain the real state of the Stadtholder's affairs in that country, we have received the most unpleasant and discouraging accounts. The violence of the prevailing faction both against the Prince of Orange and Great Britain seems to be every day increasing, and as they are easily led to believe what they wish, they are persuaded that we are utterly ruined and affect to consider us as of no importance in the scale of Europe. This idea is most industriously spread with a view no doubt of turning the thoughts of their countrymen from the renewal of their former connections with us, and in order more effectually to destroy the Stadtholder's influence by holding out the nation with whom he will always be considered as in some degree connected, as the object of contempt and hatred. Under these circumstances all steps on our part to conciliation would be rather mischievous than useful, and this is most decidedly the opinion of those persons in Holland who are most desirous of returning to the old system.

With regard to the definitive treaty, it is His Majesty's pleasure that you should declare that, there being no longer any reason for treating that business in France, it must be concluded either here or at The Hague, and that the sooner it is finished the better. I am sure it is needless for me to suggest to Your Grace arguments in favour of a determination which accords so exactly with the spirit of all Your Grace's conversations both with the French and Dutch ministers. It was always unseemly that any negotiation between the Republic and Great Britain should appear to go

through the hands of France, but to continue this appearance when the business with France is completely and definitively settled would be still more indecent and absurd. . . . .

Our last accounts from Constantinople speak as if war was nearly certain, but the great alteration in the language of the French Ambassador here rather gives me hopes of peace. I find by his conversation with Mo<sup>r</sup>. Simolin (which conversation he said he was authorized to hold) that his Court has now relinquished all ideas of modification with respect to the Crimea and is willing to recommend peace to the Porte upon the ground of the Empress's retaining the sovereignty of that peninsula as well as of the Cuban and the isle of Taman. How far this alteration has been wrought by intrigues in the French cabinet I know not, but that it is in a great measure, if not wholly, to be attributed to the steady and friendly language which His Majesty has uniformly held with regard to Russia, can not be doubted. I can not but suppose that Mo<sup>r</sup>. Markow will see it in this light.

## JOHN FREDERICK SACKVILLE, 3rd DUKE OF DORSET

1784-1789

**D**ORSET was appointed to the embassy on the formal retirement of Manchester, and remained ambassador till the Revolution. He had no great reputation for industry and ability, indeed the reverse, and it cannot be said that his despatches refute the unfavourable estimate formed by his contemporaries. But he was a handsome and polished gentleman who obtained without difficulty the favour of the King, Queen and courtiers. His despatches to England during the years preceding the outbreak of the Revolution have been printed in the Camden Society, 3rd series, Vols. xvi and xix, under the supervision of the late Mr. Oscar Browning. A notice of him will be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. No copy of his instructions can be found in P.R.O., but Dr. Hubert Hall has found the originals among the Duke's papers; see p. 306.

His secretary to the embassy, DANIEL HAILES, judging from his correspondence, was a man of considerable ability. His despatches, at this critical period of French history, are in refreshing contrast to the jejuneness and shallowness of Dorset's reports. As Dorset was generally in England during the summer and autumn months, he acted as *chargé d'affaires* and minister, to which rank he was raised in April 1784. He remained in Paris till 1788 when he was transferred to Warsaw, "from one Poland to another".<sup>1</sup> Another able assistant was WILLIAM EDEN, later Lord Auckland, who had been sent to negotiate the commercial treaty of 1786, and did useful diplomatic work till 1788 in the embassy, when he was transferred to Spain.

<sup>1</sup> Hailes to Carmarthen, Paris, 15 Oct. 1788 (*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 30).

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 11.*)

FRANCIS, MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO  
DORSET.

St. James', 13 February 1784.

On Tuesday night I receivd by express the important news of the signature of articles for the preservation of the peace by the respective ministers of the Russian and Ottoman Empires at Constantinople on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January and make no doubt of this intelligence having been receivd with the greatest satisfaction at Versailles.

The anxiety expressed by the ministers of France for a speedy determination of that business is easily to be accounted for, and Your Grace will I am sure see the necessity of being particularly attentive to the motions of that Court at the present period, as they are now at full liberty to turn their thoughts to the pursuit of those plans which I fear they have so much at heart: I mean the injuring in every way in their power the British interests in India, both commercial and political, and which they will regard as more practical now than at any former period on account of their new connection with Holland. I have heard that a treaty actually subsists between France and the United Provinces, the great if not the sole purport of which is to endeavour to drive the English from the East Indies. If such a treaty does exist it would be a most important service to obtain a copy of it. . . . .

(*Ibid., no. 12.*)

CARMARTHEN TO DANIEL HAILES.<sup>1</sup>

St. James', 1 June 1784.

It will be extremely necessary to ascertain the naval force which the Dutch propose keeping up in India. The French having already suggested the idea of making a still greater reduction in the marine of the two Crowns to remain in those parts, I told the Comte d'Adhémar that we could not make any alteration in the plan already established for that purpose till we knew the intentions of Holland upon the subject. . . . .

Another very material point of information to obtain will be the real extent and probable consequence of the connection which at present subsists between France and the Emperor, and how far

<sup>1</sup> *Chargé d'affaires* in Dorset's absence.



the present contention between Holland and the latter power may have been concerted with the former. It is of the greatest importance to be fully appriz'd of that circumstance, and I sincerely wish that you would take the earliest opportunity to give Sir R. Keith the most precise information you can collect upon the subject as well as upon every other where the joint interests of France and Austria are materially concerned. This intelligence, I am sure you will be convinc'd, must be convey'd in the most secret and confidential manner. I could also wish you to sound, tho with the utmost caution, M. de Merci in regard to the claims of his master upon the Dutch frontier and endeavour to penetrate if possible the Emperor's real views in that quarter; at the same time you may continue to suggest to that minister of what essential service England might be to His Imperial Majesty's commercial plan, if once a confidential intercourse could be established upon the subject, though at the same time France must be a stranger to that as well as to every other subject of mutual advantage which may be discussed between the Courts of London and Vienna.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 12.*)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET.

St. James', 9 July 1784.

It will be highly beneficial for His Majesty's service to be (as expeditiously as possible) informed of the object and extent of the negotiations now in agitation at the Court of Versailles . . . . as having induced Prince Henry of Prussia and Mo<sup>r</sup>. Horst to undertake a journey to France. Though the Comte de Lusi has repeatedly assured me that the King his master had no one object to settle with the French Court but as respecting the Prince of Orange, yet it would be highly imprudent to trust to those assurances at a time when the general situation of Europe and the particular circumstances of the Emperor's pretensions on the side of Holland are so likely to give rise to a much nearer connection between the Courts of Versailles and Berlin than has subsisted since the war of 1740. Every circumstance of the arrangements lately made between France and Sweden must likewise be in the highest degree interesting to this country, as the permitting the French to have a depôt for naval stores &c. in the northern seas must in its consequences be highly pernicious to the other maritime, nay even

to the rest of the commercial powers of Europe, and from the situation of Gottenburg, may in a short space of time affect Great Britain in the most alarming degree.<sup>1</sup>

These particular circumstances as well as the general views of France with regard to the strengthening her own marine and to her system of politics in the East Indies (perhaps the object the most important of all for us to be continually and repeatedly informed of) will I am sure, appear to Your Grace well deserving your most anxious and unremitting attention. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

St. James', 27 July 1784.

Cypher.

. . . . . The present situation of France in regard to its finances as well as commerce might furnish a reasonable ground of hope for the continuance of the public tranquillity so far at least as may depend upon the will of France, was it not for that restless and ever enterprizing spirit of ambition, which in spite of every idea of their own real interests as (*sic*) perpetually at work in forming new plans of intrigue if not of conquest, and which, as Your Grace well observes, seems now to direct its course towards the East Indies. As far as any progress has been made in the projected alliance between France and Holland, the most serious consequences to this country (in regard to our oriental possessions) are to be guarded against, the mutual guarantee of foreign possessions being plainly concerted with a view to future hostilities with us in that quarter of the world; at least such is indisputably the fairest construction we can put upon the measure, and I flatter myself that no assurances, however friendly or pacific, may ever deceive us into a false security on this most important subject.

I wish much to see a copy of the Dutch counter-pretensions which they have prepared for the Court of Vienna, as likewise a memorial said to have been presented by the Comte de Mercy to the French Court respecting the Bishopric of Liège, which is said to be drawn in very strong terms indeed.

<sup>1</sup> Alludes to a report (Dorset to Carmarthen, Paris, 1 July) that Gothenburg was to be ceded to France in return for one of the French West Indies and an annuity of £25,000 sterling.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 13.*)

St. James', 19 October 1784.

No. 26.

Nothing could be more agreeable to His Majesty than the very friendly proof of the sincere disposition of the Court of France to cultivate and perpetuate the present happy state of harmony between the two Courts evinced by the sentiments contained in Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes note to Your Grace on the subject of the naval force to be respectively maintained by the two powers in India. A real confidential communication of each other's wishes and intentions seems to be the only circumstance which can at any period be wanting to render to the two powers that degree of weight and consideration in the general system which would entitle them so justly to appear the arbiters of Europe.

With regard to what may afford many subjects of discussion to the two Courts, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes may be convinced that a fair and really candid representation of facts will ever be attended to with friendship and answerd with justice on our part. We expect but the same conduct on the part of France, and narrow and illiberal prejudice will soon lose its effect ; in this case both powers must be gainers.

Your Grace will not fail to transmit every information you can obtain in respect to the dispute between the Emperor and the Dutch. Both sides seem to talk a very high language indeed, and however France may be connected with Austria I cannot conceive in this instance the Court of Versailles will quietly acquiesce in the Emperor's violent encroachment on what the Dutch esteem a sacred and inviolable right. France, Spain, England, nay indeed every commercial power, must be more or less interested in the event of this dispute, and I should be happy to know what impression the idea of opening the Scheld may produce on the other maritime and commercial powers of Europe. It would be ridiculous to suppose France would at once open herself with freedom and sincerity to England, and yet a confidential interview of that nature might perhaps at present be productive of the most beneficial consequences to both countries.

*(Ibid.)*

St. James', 19 October 1784.

No. 27.

Cypher.

. . . . . Your Grace is likewise expected to transmit every possible degree of information in respect to the part the Court of Versailles mean to act in the present dispute between the Emperor and Holland, whether by any secret agreement they mean to sacrifice their newly acquired allies or whether by a more extraordinary and scarcely credible exertion of good faith they propose supporting them at all events against the pretensions of their powerful neighbour, will, as Your Grace must be convinc'd, be of the utmost importance to us to be apprized of. . . . .

*(Ibid.)*

St. James', 6 November 1784.

No. 29.

. . . . . It is undoubtedly the wish of this government to avoid taking any decided part at present in the disputes between the Emperor and Holland; common decency as well as prudence may make it adviseable to lament the prospect of an ensuing rupture, though undoubtedly a continental war which might engross the attention of France without obliging England to take a part, in which perhaps France might in a short time be herself engaged, would surely be of the most essential service to this country. It is much to be wished by us that no accomodation should take place, and if matters could possibly be so managed as to occasion the destruction of the alliance between France and Austria, England must be a considerable gainer in the end. My letter (no. 26) *en clair* was meant to be opened, and containd only the substance of what has frequently passed in conversation between me and M. d'Adhemar, and likewise with M. Barthelemy. The sentiments may indeed be perfectly good in theory, but can never with any degree of safety, I am convinced, be reduced to practise. . . . .

*(Ibid.)*

St. James', 3 December 1784.

The Comte d'Adhemar on Tuesday last read to me by order of his Court a copy of the note sent from Versailles to Vienna on the

twentieth of last month. I own the very strong language in which it was drawn surprized me exceedingly; how it will have been received by His Imperial Majesty a few weeks may discover. In the meantime however I shall be anxious to learn the probable effects expected in France to be produced by it. In our conference the Ambassador repeatedly suggested the idea of the intervention of the two Crowns in order to prevent a war taking place. To this I answered that in case either the Emperor or Holland wished the King to interpose his good offices they should apply directly to His Majesty, and assured him the intervention of any other power would be totally unnecessary. Your Grace will be so good as to observe a similar language in case any application on the subject should be made to you by the French ministry. . . . .

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 16.*)

St. James', 20 May 1785.

It will be at this very interesting period extremely desirable to know as accurately as possible how far the Court of Versailles may be engaged in support of the Emperor's favourite object the Bavarian exchange, in case that attempt should produce any direct opposition to the execution of it from those Princes who are now active in forming a league in Germany in order to prevent it. The present conduct of France and Austria, notwithstanding any assurances to the contrary, seems to imply a secret and on that account perhaps a more dangerous degree of concert between them. The very idea of alienating the Netherlands from Austria in whose possession they should remain, if there is any faith in treatys, is more than sufficient to arouse the attention of this Court, but when reports from different quarters support a probability of their being ultimately destined for France, it is indeed an object of the most serious nature to the safety as well as the prosperity of England to be informed how far so bold and daring a measure can have been seriously thought of as either eligible or practicable. I need not I am sure suggest to Your Grace that every information upon this subject should be procured in the most secret and cautious manner, as there would be the greatest impropriety in giving the Court of France any reason to suppose, at this moment at least, our apprehensions of a plan of such a nature being in agitation. When the matter becomes fully and correctly ascertaind it may perhaps be necessary to adopt a very different line of conduct,



but in the mean time it behoves us from every motive of prudence and good policy to be discreet in our mode of proceeding, however determined we may be to resist the carrying so formidable a measure into execution.

(*Ibid.*, no. 17, p. 789.)

CARMARTHEN TO HAILES.

St. James', 12 August 1785.

No. 27.

As it is extremely material to obtain every possible degree of information respecting the views of France at a moment so critical as the present, I must desire you will endeavour to discover the probable effect which the conclusion of the German League will produce in the councils of the Court of Versailles. The very active part taken by Prussia in this business, and the apparent dissatisfaction occasioned by it in the two Imperial Courts, may probably render it necessary for France to declare how far she considers the measure either as expedient or liable to objection. His Majesty in his Electoral capacity being one of the contracting parties, renders this information of course the more necessary, but I only mention'd Prussia as it appears to me highly probable that the silence hitherto observed by France is owing to a continuation of her intelligence with the Court of Berlin on every important occasion, though unwilling as yet to declare openly in favour of a measure no little agreeable to the Emperor. The close and intimate connection which subsists between the two Imperial Courts, and the strong appearance of jealousy and ill humour between those of Petersburg and Berlin may in a short time be productive of the most serious consequences and should an open rupture take place between Russia and Prussia, it may render France obliged to take a decided part in opposition to that cautious system of policy which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes has hitherto so closely adhered to, and as the real degree of friendship between the Courts of Versailles and Vienna will then be put to the tryal, it cannot be an object unworthy the most active endeavours on our part to discover the line of conduct which under such circumstances France may adopt.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 17, p. 873.*)

St. James', 14 October 1785.

No. 31.

The language of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes on the subject of the commercial arrangement as stated in your very interesting dispatch no. 11, has fully confirmed my suspicions of the French ministry still persisting in their unwarrantable construction of the definitive treaty respecting former stipulations between the two countries on that subject, and this mode of proceeding will I fear produce a considerable degree of ill humour in future, as it is impossible we on our part can ever admit its validity. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes may be assured of our sincere desire to proceed with as little delay as possible to the completion of a commercial treaty on the strictest principles of good faith, and with a sincere view to the reciprocal advantage and mutual benefits of both countries in the execution of it. There can be no justifiable delay in laying the basis of the negotiation, as a more desirable one cannot be devised than that expressed by the very words of the definitive treaty itself in the 18<sup>th</sup> article. If France is therefore sincere in her professions, a few hours will be sufficient for Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval to make some specific proposals; and we shall be ready on our part not only to consider them but to suggest perhaps some alteration which both countries will receive with pleasure and be equally anxious to see carried into effect.

(*Ibid.*, p. 971.)

St. James', 9 December 1785.

[No. 36.]

The great object which at present demands the attention of the two Courts is indisputably the arrangement of a commercial system founded on the basis of mutual and reciprocal advantage. By the letter of the treaty the time is (within three weeks) elapsed, which was originally prescribed for this very important as well as complicated business.

If this discussion however was but at first proposed merely *pro formâ* and with no intent of being brought to an efficient degree of perfection, the mere lapse of a certain number of months will at least serve to prove the fallacy of any flattering hope which the proposal of such an adjustment might have created in either king-

dom, and the party who shrinks from the further prosecution of so beneficial a measure towards both, can alone be responsible for the consequences.

The result however of such an event I trust is by no means to be apprehended in the present instance: I therefore, Sir, am now to direct you by the King's command, to state candidly and fully to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes the present situation in which the proposed regulation of commercial interests stand between the two countrys. We have in fact but barely got over the threshold of the discussion, notwithstanding so many months have elapsed since the commissarys of the respective Courts were authorizd to enter upon the negotiation.

Three weeks only remain for the conclusion of the business as originally stipulated by the 18<sup>th</sup> art. of the definitive treaty: the term therefore cannot be lookd upon as worthy the consideration of three minutes. What then remains to be done? To consider whether a commercial system must not produce the most beneficial consequences to both countrys. If France is earnest in thinking it will, let her but name a period of three, six, or twelve months from the first of January for the completion of such a system formed upon a close and detailed investigation of the state of manufactures, trade and every possible consideration of a commercial nature applicable to the respective interests of the two countrys, and England will shew herself ready as well as willing to come to a fair conclusion.

His Majesty has already given the strongest proof of his most gracious inclination to co-operate with the Most Christian King towards the attainment of so desirable an event, in which the interests of every individual of their subjects, not less than the national prosperity of their dominions, is deeply and materially affected. By the event I mean the forming a solid and permanent connection between the trading part of the two countrys, and thereby promoting every source of industry from which the most solid glory to the Sovereigns, the truest wealth to the inhabitants in general of each kingdom and the most probable expectation not only of tranquillity but of prosperity to both countrys can ever be desired. And that such is the object of His Majesty's warmest wishes cannot be disputed when I inform you, Sir, that the King has been pleased to appoint the Right Hon<sup>ble</sup>. William Eden, one of His Majesty's most honorable Privy Council, to be His Majesty's

envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Court of France for the sole purpose of negotiating (with such ministers as His Most Christian Majesty may think proper to authorize to treat with him) on the subject of a commercial arrangement between the two kingdoms.

With respect to the term which may necessarily be allotted for the completion of this business, six months appear the properest for its conclusion ; but we wish in this to accomodate as far as possible the ideas of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes upon the subject. The committee of trade have receivd His Majesty's orders in Council to proceed to the necessary investigation of the several branches of commerce likely to be interested in the alterations which it may be considered expedient to adopt, with as little delay as possible ; and M<sup>r</sup>. Eden himself will be named of the committee in order to collect directly such information as may be desired from the examination of the most respectable persons concerned in the principal manufactures of this country. The abilities of this gentleman are too well known and too justly appreciated by the public to render any encomium necessary, though even to a foreign Court.

Having now, Sir, communicated to you the real situation of this business as far as England is concerned, you will not fail to explain the subject as expeditiously as may be to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes and desire him to give you an answer to this communication as soon as possible. I dispatch a messenger on purpose and he is to wait for the answer of the French Court. The most natural mode of proceeding appears a declaration to be signed by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes and yourself of the determination of the two Courts to prolong the term for the purpose of negotiating the commercial arrangement for a certain period. With respect to M<sup>r</sup>. Eden's public character, he must of course be accredited to His Most Christian Majesty and therefore Mo<sup>r</sup>. Vergennes will not object I dare say to communicate directly with him (*pro formâ*) upon the subject of his mission on his first arrival though but for half an hour. With regard to the real negotiation, it may be carried on with any other person whom the Court of Versailles may think proper to appoint specifically, furnished with due powers to treat with the King's Minister for the adjustment of the commercial arrangement. It certainly would be proper that person should be appointed Minister Plenipotentiary, considering the rank of His Majesty's Minister. This however being rather a matter of attention due to the King

than an object of importance to His Majesty's service, I make no doubt but the French Court will instantly see the propriety of the measure without any further arguments being made use of to recommend it. . . . .

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 17, p. 993.*)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET.

St. James', 16 December 1785.

No. 21.

. . . . . It appearing very material to obtain the earliest and most accurate information on the following points, I have received His Majesty's pleasure to desire Your Grace will make the subjects of them the objects of your immediate enquiry, and that you will transmit the result of such enquiries to me as you shall from time to time be able to procure the desired information :—

1. The purport of any treaties of commerce lately made or now negotiating between France and any other power.

2. Whether the Court of France have taken or are taking any measures for the encouragement of the southern whale fishery, and particularly whether they have granted any, and what, bounties for that purpose.

3. Whether any ships have sailed, or are intended to sail from any of the ports of France for the purpose before mentioned, particularly from the port of Dunkirk, and what success such ships as have already sailed on this fishery may have had.

4. Whether the Court of France are giving any encouragement to the consumption of whale or other animal oil within their dominions.

5. Whether that Court are negotiating with the United States of America for the admission of whale and other animal oil produced by the fisheries carried on by the people belonging to the said States into the dominions of France.

(*Ibid., p. 1021*)

St. James', 23 December 1785.

No. 22.

In the consideration of the commercial arrangements mutually desired to be formed between Great Britain and France, several questions arise which make it necessary for me to trouble Your



Grace in order to obtain information in what manner the subjects, merchandize and ships of Great Britain and His Majesty's other dominions are treated with respect to duties or otherwise in their commercial intercourse with France, according to the present laws and usages of that Kingdom. I am therefore to desire that Your Grace will endeavour to procure and transmit to me an exact account of all the duties imposed upon any goods, being the produce or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland imported into any of the provinces of France, stating particularly whether goods the produce and manufacture of Great Britain and Ireland so imported pay a higher duty than goods of the like species imported from other countries and what the difference of such duty is, and stating also whether there are any and what prohibitions upon the importation of any goods, the produce or manufacture of Great Britain and Ireland, and particularly whether any such goods being prohibited to be imported from Great Britain and Ireland, are allowed to be imported from any other country into the provinces of France, and whether in the duties imposed on goods brought into the city of Paris or the other cities of France, there is any distinction made between goods, the produce or manufacture of Great Britain and Ireland, and the like goods being the produce or manufacture of France or any other countries.

Also an exact account of the difference of the duties imposed on goods, the produce and manufacture of the East Indies, imported into any of the provinces of France directly from the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope by the subjects of France, and on such as are imported from Great Britain or from other foreign countries; as also whether there are any, and what, prohibitions on goods, the produce and manufacture of the East Indies, which affect such goods imported from Great Britain, and do not affect the like goods either imported from any other foreign country, or from the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, by the subjects of France.

And also an account how far, under the *arrêts* or *ordonnances* now in force, British ships are allowed to trade into the ports of France, whether they are allowed to bring into the said ports only goods, the produce or manufacture of Great Britain and Ireland, from the ports of the said Kingdoms, or whether they are allowed to import from thence any foreign goods, or whether they are allowed to import foreign goods from any other countries in Europe,

Asia, Africa and America, and whether British ships are allowed in any manner, to trade from port to port in France, either in goods, the produce and manufacture of Great Britain and Ireland, brought from the said Kingdoms, or in goods brought from other foreign countries or in goods of the produce and manufacture of France, or of any other country, laden in the ports of France ; and whether there is in any case any duty imposed on the tonnage of such ships, and whether any distinction is made between British ships and those of any foreign country in the several before mentioned particulars.

I am aware that it may be very difficult for Your Grace to obtain the information now desired with accuracy and as speedily as it is wished by any private means, and as it can only be procured by reference to the public offices, I should think that the most effectual as well as the most proper method would be by applying directly to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes for his assistance. He will naturally see that the first object on our part in forming a commercial arrangement must of course be to obtain accurate information of the exact footing on which we now stand, in order to judge of the alterations which we may find it advisable to propose : and I am too well persuaded of the candour and liberality of that minister's way of thinking to doubt his readiness to afford Your Grace every facility in his power which may tend to the accomplishment of a business we have mutually so much at heart, and which is so evidently beneficial to both countries.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 18.*)

St. James', 17 February 1786.

No. 6.

The Court of France having repeatedly acquiesced in the principle upon which the proposal of diminishing the marine force of the two countrys in the East Indies was founded, I flatter myself no reasonable objection can be found on the part of the French Government to an observation which naturally occurs to the King's servants in consequence of the treaty of alliance lately concluded between His Most Christian Majesty and the States General of the United Provinces, which is this, that in consequence of the stipulations of that treaty, Dutch ships must be considered as French ships, so far as any third power can possibly be concerned with either of the two contracting parties.

No precise agreement can therefore be made upon this subject with England until we are assured that we shall not be obliged to keep up a force double to that which we have hitherto understood France was equally bound not to exceed, for instance, one 64, 2 frigates and a cutter was the force France appeared disposed to agree upon. If Holland has the same force, England must have 2 64's, 4 frigates and 2 cutters in order to be upon a footing of equality with two nations who by their late treaty must be considered (in those seas particularly perhaps) as forming one consolidated power.

It will therefore be highly necessary to come to some further explanation upon this subject, before any final arrangement is concluded and it is hoped that the friendly professions of the Court of Versailles towards the King, and the sincere desire of His Most Christian Majesty to cultivate and promote the harmony at present happily subsisting between the two Courts is too well founded to admit of any delay in giving a satisfactory answer to a question of such importance.

The apparent tendency of the late alliance justifies the attention which this Court will unceasingly pay to the effects of it, and no one ought to be surprized at such explanations as we may think ourselves bound to demand from those who have thought proper to contract it.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 18.*)

CARMARTHEN TO HAILES.

Whitehall, 21 July 1786.

Although the business of the commercial arrangements between this country and France seems hitherto to have been discussed with great appearance of candour and fair dealing on the part of the French ministers, it is still extremely necessary to be attentive to the political conduct of that Court, whether considered as directly affecting the interests of England, or in a more remote though probably not less effectual manner directed in the first instance towards some other powers.

One circumstance of this latter discription, and which in the present moment it is particularly necessary for us to be informed of, is the result of those endeavours which France has so anxiously employed in order to induce Spain to accede to her alliance with Holland; and I am the more anxious to know as far as possible

the true state of this matter, as from the discouraging language which Mo<sup>r</sup>. Florida Blanca is supposed to have held upon the subject, the further negotiating of this important object has for some time been carried on in France, where it appears to have been conducted with so much secrecy and caution as hitherto to have prevented anything like an authentic account of its probable issue having transpired.

You will therefore, Sir, endeavour, with every possible degree of caution and discretion, to learn the true state of this affair, which on many accounts may in the event prove so important to England; and what at this time renders it necessary to call for your attention more particularly to this subject is the disappointment which the delaying hitherto the conclusion of it has occasioned in Sweden. The truth of this report I have little reason to doubt, and although not unacquainted with the restless disposition of the Swedish monarch and his wish to be thought perpetually employed in great and extensive lines of politicks, and of course aware how little his speculations are sometimes to be depended upon, yet in this instance I think his dependance upon France may have drawn from that Court some distant hints upon the subject, which he has not had sufficient discretion to conceal. You will not fail, Sir, to keep an attentive eye on the conduct of the Swedish Ambassador, from whom perhaps some useful information may be collected. It will at all events be of use to observe the footing on which that minister stands with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes, and what sort of impression the late transactions during the diet in Sweden and the manner in which that assembly has terminated, may have produced on the Court of Versailles in respect to the political or personal character of their northern friend and ally.

(*Ibid.*)

Whitehall, 29 September 1786.

By the dispatches received this morning from M<sup>r</sup>. Eden I learnt with great satisfaction that the commercial treaty was in a manner concluded, that is, that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval had been authorized to sign it on the day after the date of these dispatches. So interesting a peice of intelligence cannot but have afforded great pleasure to His Majesty and his confidential servants, as a commercial arrangement must afford the strongest additional motive to hope for a continuation of the publick tranquillity, so apparently the

object, as it undoubtedly is to the interest of the two countrys to preserve undiminished and undisturbed. I cannot however help observing to you the necessity of still keeping up your usual vigilance and attention to the conduct, and as far as possible, to the views of the French Court at a period so particularly interesting as the present. The commercial treaty undoubtedly exhibits an apparent desire of establishing a friendly intercourse between the two countrys on the part of France; and whatever effect this measure may produce on the mind of the public respecting the pacifick disposition of that power, it will still behove us not to be inattentive to the political objects of our rival because she professes herself friendly, or perhaps liberally as well as literally so, upon a subject of certainly of great extent as well as importance, but still in its principle entirely of a commercial nature.

However plausible the language she may hold upon the present occasion may be, the utmost attention should be paid to the motives which may certainly, though indirectly perhaps, have induc'd her to acquiesce so far in our wishes on the subject as she actually has done, and it will not I trust be construed into any unbecoming distrust of the professions of France on my part, if I suggest to you my own apprehensions that our suspicions of her good faith and friendly professions in political matters ought to be in exact proportion to the facilitys she may have evinced upon matters purely commercial. By giving way to our wishes on many points respecting trade, she may have lookd for an invidious advantage in promoting distrust at least, if not actual animosity, as the natural consequence between Great Britain and other powers with whom we have more natural as well as more ancient connections of commerce interwoven with those of a political nature. This may furnish sufficient ground for an apparently friendly conduct towards us on the part of France in the transacting the business now probably concluded; and though this interpretation of the conduct of a Power professedly our friend may be thought too severe, and perhaps not founded in the smallest degree of truth or justice, yet when such a Court as that of Versailles is concerned at such a period and under such circumstances as the present, I should think myself unworthy the office I have the honor to hold, did I not communicate my opinion upon the necessity of not being lulled by the present favourable appearances into a degree of perhaps fatal security.



(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 21.)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET.

Whitehall, 20 February 1787.

No. 2.

I receiv'd Your Grace's dispatch no. [9] containing the melancholy news of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes' death on Sunday last.<sup>1</sup>

The death of so able a minister cannot but be consider'd as a great and essential loss to his Court, and I can assure Your Grace that the King spoke in the most flattering terms on the subject of that minister's great and respectable character, not only in point of talents but of integrity, and most sincerely condoles with His Most Christian Majesty on the melancholy event which has deprived him of so valuable and excellent a minister.

The universal good character which I have heard of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin from all those whom I have ever conversed with who have known him either in Spain or elsewhere affords me the highest satisfaction in learning that that nobleman is appointed by his Sovereign to succeed Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes in the foreign department, and I flatter myself that the new minister will be no less disposed to cultivate the friendship so happily and so substantially establish'd between the two countrys by the commercial treaty than his illustrious predecessor was to contribute to the formation of so important a connection.

(Ibid.)

Whitehall, 6 June 1787.

No. 9.

It appears as well from Your Grace's correspondence as from Mr. Eden's that the critical state of affairs in Holland gives, as might be expected, some uneasiness to the French Court, and they may possibly be desirous of finding some opening to communicate with this Court on that subject.

It is not thought advisable to instruct Your Grace to say any thing upon it in His Majesty's name, unless some direct application should be made from the French ministers, or new circumstances should render it necessary. But if the conversation should be resumed, the properest language for Your Grace will be that you are unable to say anything ministerially on the subject, but that

<sup>1</sup> 13 February.

you are persuaded from the general knowledge of the sentiments of His Majesty's servants, as well as from the speech at the conclusion of the session, that His Majesty sees the present situation of affairs with the greatest concern from wishing well both to the tranquillity and independency of the Republick, and to the general repose of Europe, which cannot but be ultimately endangered by the progress of these disorders, and in the consequences of which it is obvious that England as well as other countries may eventually be involved.

You will take care to convey these insinuations in the most amicable manner, and not to introduce them at all, unless the occasion naturally arises. If it should lead to any opening for farther discussion, you will take whatever may pass *ad referendum*, and lose no time in acquainting me with the result.

It is His Majesty's earnest wish that the present situation of affairs should not lead to any disagreeable discussion between the two Courts. At the same time, the crisis seems so far advanced, that there is no foreseeing to what extremities it may lead. Your Grace should therefore use your utmost exertions to endeavour to learn the real objects of the French Court, and how far they are making any disposition of their troops, or taking any other measures, which may shew an intention to give open support to the Province of Holland. With this view, it is material to ascertain as exactly as possible the effective strength, condition and distribution of the army in the different parts of France, and also to learn more particularly than is stated in the printed speeches delivered at the conclusion of the Assembly of the Notables what measures are likely to be immediately taken for remedying the disorders in the French finances, especially how far the reforms, estimated at 40 millions of livres, are actually settled; for what number of years it will be necessary that the loans of 50 millions which the Archbishop of Toulouse mentions are intended to be applied to the reimbursements should be repeated; and what particular taxes are most likely to be adopted to supply the remaining deficiency, as well as to replace the *gabelle* and the *corvée* which it seems determined to suppress. Your utmost attention should also be employed to learn what is the actual state of the French Navy and what exertions could be made within a given time for fitting out any number of ships for service.

All these particulars being of the utmost importance to enable

His Majesty's servants to form any judgement of the issue which may be expected in the present very interesting situation of affairs, I need not add that Your Grace should use the greatest discretion in making these enquiries in such a way as to avoid creating any alarm.

I desire Your Grace will communicate this dispatch to Mr. Eden, as the contents of it are equally necessary for his guidance in the present situation of affairs.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, *no.* 25.)

CARMARTHEN TO EDEN.

Whitehall, 26 June 1787.<sup>1</sup>

No. 17.

. . . . His Majesty's servants will be extremely desirous to learn the result of the confidential conversation which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin proposes to hold with you, previous to their [? your] departure. You will of course hear everything he may wish to say on the present state of affairs, and undertake to report it for His Majesty's information; but you will avoid the appearance of being authorized to make any direct communication of His Majesty's sentiments in answer to the intimation which has been made to you, as it seems advisable that such communications should be delayed 'till the French Court has explained itself in a clearer manner. It will be right however that you should express your firm persuasion of the King's anxious wish that nothing should arise to interrupt the friendship so happily subsisting between the two Courts, and you may take an opportunity of stating to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin that the squadron which has been lately directed to sail, and which has been talked of as a subject of alarm, is in fact only a small detachment of guardships sent out for the purpose of exercising, and which would have gone out last year if the triennial relief of the officers, ships and men on the several stations had not prevented it, and which will probably be annually repeated in future. This circumstance therefore you will speak of as wholly unconnected with the situation of Holland. At the same time, you will not disguise that you have reason to believe the posture of affairs there certainly does engage the anxious attention of this government, and that this country would never consider the French alliance (under whatever circumstances it were made) as giving them any

<sup>1</sup> The rough draught of this dispatch is in Pitt's handwriting.

exclusive right to interfere in the internal concerns of the Republick, which a part of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's conversation, as stated in your dispatch, seems to imply.

The profession of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin, "that it is the sincere desire of France to assist in restoring tranquillity between the provinces respecting each other *in the first place*, and then to secure to the Prince every right that his family can claim under the constitution, and as much power as he can desire if he means to make a right use of it," is so vague and general that it furnishes little ground of judging what plan of settlement they wish to bring about. Nor does it appear how any proposal for restoring tranquillity between the provinces can be separated from the discussion of the just rights of the Stadtholder.

I must also observe that the accounts which are just received from Berlin . . . . seem very inconsistent with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's general professions of moderation, and it may perhaps be useful to let that minister know that you are apprized of the answer which the King of Prussia is supposed to have received to his overtures for accommodation.

You will not fail to use all the means in your power to discover as much as possible, the real views of the French Court, and to collect all the farther information you can before your return, on the several points contained in my letter to the Duke of Dorset no. 9, and which His Grace was desired to communicate to you.

It will be proper that you should shew this dispatch to the Duke of Dorset, as His Grace is instructed to hold a similar language to the French ministers whenever the affairs of Holland become the subject of conversation.

(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 25.)

Whitehall, 29 June 1787.

No. 19.

. . . . His Majesty's ministers agree entirely in the opinion expressed by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin that the principle of such an interference as he alludes to in the disputes of the United Provinces is indefensible. They agree too that it would infallibly and justly become reciprocal, on whichever side it commenced, and if the French government acts fairly up to this principle, they have nothing to apprehend on the part of His Majesty which can disturb the publick tranquillity. It is at the same time true that His

Majesty cannot be uninterested in the present disputes in the United Provinces. If they really turned upon points as trifling as Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin seems to have represented them, speaking of them as if they were no more than questions of idle etiquette and parade, or at most, of insignificant patronage, it would not only be impossible that any power should seek to effectuate a war in Europe for such objects, but they would equally be unworthy the attention of any foreign power or the exertions of any of the parties which divide the Republick. But if the real substance of the executive authority and the general weight of government is the subject of dispute, and if attempts are made by the Province of Holland and by a party supposed to be under the direction of France, to destroy the just rights of the Stadtholder and make material changes in the constitution for the purpose of bringing the Republick under the influence of France to the extent of being in fact almost a province of that country, it is not wonderful that this should attract the attention of other powers in Europe.

His Majesty wishes only the preservation of the independency and true constitution of the Republick. If the points in dispute can be arranged upon those principles, it will afford His Majesty the truest satisfaction, and if the French Court is ready to enter into fair discussion of this ground of the mode to be adopted for establishing quiet in the Provinces, His Majesty will be ready to meet it with the most friendly dispositions on his part, and to embrace any practicable opportunity of co-operating to so desirous an end. You will endeavour by all means to impress the French Court with a belief of the desire which His Majesty sincerely and anxiously entertains to avoid any occasion of dispute. At the same time you will be cautious to avoid saying anything which can give them reason to suppose that His Majesty would acquiesce in any attempt on the part of France to carry by force those objects which they appear for some time to have aimed at in the United Provinces. . . . .

(*Ibid.*)

Whitehall, 29 June 1787.

No. 20. Separate.

It is proper you should be informed of our intelligence that a very sudden change seems to have happened in the ideas of the French Court about ten days ago.



On the 19th day of June, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Verac went to Amsterdam. While he was there he is said to have remained in an inn without going anywhere or receiving any persons except the heads of the Patriotic body.

They are supposed to have represented very earnestly to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Verac that it was impossible to proceed in their measures with sufficient activity unless they could receive assurances of troops from France; that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Verac not only declined giving any such assurance, but upon being still more urged, tried to persuade them that it would be disadvantageous to them, and kindle a war in Europe; that in consequence of such conversation, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Verac was obliged to leave them on the 20th of June in some consternation and dissatisfaction, but on his road to The Hague, was met by a French courier, in consequence of which he dispatched Mo<sup>r</sup>. de la Coste back to Amsterdam; that on the 22<sup>d</sup> of June, the Regency of Amsterdam proposed to instruct their deputies in the States of Holland to propose a demand of the French mediation, and in support of that motion, to read a paper which had been originally composed in French, offering them assurances that the proposal of mediation would be accepted by France, and that she would secure to them in that character all the points which the Patriot party had insisted upon, with this remarkable addition, that if she met with any difficulties either foreign or domestic she would compel their opponents to submit to them by force.

That on the [23<sup>d</sup>] of June such motion was accordingly made in the States of Holland but without reading the paper alluded to. This was taken *ad referendum*, but has probably by this time been acceded to by the States of Holland.

It would be worth attending to this change of council to see whether, if the account be well founded, it was produced by anything more than the necessity of the measure for the purpose of upholding the party.

The proposal which has been made in the States of Holland will probably be made by them to the States General, where it is imagined it will be taken *ad referendum*, which will gain some time for our friends to consider what answer should be given. It has been suggested that it might be right for our friends, who have the majority in the States-General to say that they have no objection to such a proposal, provided other powers, equally interested in the welfare of the Republic, are joined to France, and that

England might be proposed singly or with the Emperor and Prussia. If England was proposed singly, it might be the best means of settling this business, provided we could beforehand come to a right understanding with France on the terms on which the two mediators would jointly agree; but otherwise it might not only lead us into more difficulties if we could not agree, which is what we should much wish to avoid. And if no such previous concert can be agreed upon between us and France, it would perhaps be better to have the other two powers included in the mediation.

These particulars are not mentioned to you with a view to your communicating them to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin, but merely for your information, and that, if a good opportunity should present itself, you should shew our disposition to avoid any step that might lead us into farther difficulties with the Court of France; and at the same time our readiness to come into any, that can put an end to the embarrassments which the present situation in Holland may occasion.

(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 25.)

Whitehall, 29 June 1787.

No. 21. Secret.

In my letter no. 19 of this date I have conveyed to you His Majesty's instructions respecting the substance of the language you are to hold to the French ministers in consequence of the communications which you have received from them. The object of this letter is to open to you more fully the sentiments of His Majesty's servants respecting the present state of affairs, and at the same time to point out such topics as may convince the French Court that the professions of His Majesty's disposition are not the language of form or compliment, but are meant sincerely, and will be adhered to *as long as the conduct of other powers will admit of it*.

The sentiments of this country, and more distinctly of this Court, were manifested in the eagerness with which they embraced the commercial treaty with France. Without considering on what particular points one or the other country may gain most in a system formed for the benefit of both, it is His Majesty's wish that that system should, at all events, be faithfully and exactly executed, and above all, that its leading object should be kept in view, to cement a durable peace and friendly intercourse between the two countries.

The actual situation of this country opens to no prospect of foreign ambition or aggrandizement. To cultivate that situation by the arts of peace, is the single object to which our political wisdom can look. Our first wish therefore is universal and permanent peace throughout the world. To obtain and preserve this on solid and secure ground, it might be worth our while to make exertions even at some expence, while such exertions wantonly to disturb that peace would manifestly be a double loss to us.

In order to cultivate and improve this actual situation of our's, the first object must naturally be the security of our present possessions in every part of the world; and nothing can give a just alarm to the councils of Great Britain which does not, in some view or other, menace that security.

It would be well if the history of mankind would allow nations to repose in perfect confidence of such a security, at least till they saw tokens of an actual disposition in other powers to disturb it. But the fact is that measures which tend in any striking manner to acquire the means of doing so, have generally operated as much to give an alarm as the avowal would of such a disposition, and even France itself has recently carried this principle so far as to state such an alarm at a measure taken by this country, the utmost object of which is manifestly no more than to keep a very moderate peace establishment in order, as my letter no. 17 explained to you.

The grounds of jealousy which might be stated on our side are of a different nature. France entered into a strict defensive alliance with Holland and some other of the Provinces. The facility with which such a connection may be turned into an offensive one is too apparent to remain unnoticed. This was done without the concurrence of Zeland and Utrecht, and consequently contrary to the constitution of the confederacy. The apparent object of such an alliance was not worth the incurring the irregularity. It was natural therefore that it should awaken that sort of jealousy in her neighbours, of which France is now herself affording a specimen, though, as I have stated, on a very different occasion.

A party in Holland, avowedly in the French interest, excited and upheld at their expence aims to subvert the constitution of the Union, and has at least meditated to remove the Stadtholder, who has hitherto been the keystone of it; the obvious effect of which will be to obtain the sort of ascendant over the Republick and all its power and possessions, both at home and abroad, which

may be turned, if the councils of France should ever be so disposed, to the annoyance of other nations, and most particularly of England.

This new situation must also be seen in the same jealous point of view by neighbouring nations, as the circumstance to which I before alluded, and only in a stronger light, because that security to the possessions of this country, which has before been represented as the only object we look to, may be thereby more directly endangered.

The United Provinces, standing on their own bottom, can have no interest which clashes with England. It must therefore be the wish of this country that they should remain independant.

To say truth, if the situation of France and that of England is rightly understood, they ought to have no real interests in which they can clash with each other, and the professions of France, which at the hour deserve the fullest confidence, so far as depends on the character of those who make them, corroborate that idea. But if her councils should change, and acquisition should become her object, her own power, seconded by the absolute government and direction of the strength of the United Provinces, might render the attempt formidable. That is therefore a situation which France could not take without giving her neighbours serious uneasiness.

To this point also it must be confessed, that the language of the French minister, as you report it, tends to give a considerable degree of satisfaction. For when that Court employs a minister of so exalted a character as Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin, to disclaim *any open* interference in the interior regulations of the constitution of that country, it can hardly be supposed that his declarations do not deserve implicit credit. It is therefore to be hoped that the reports spread at The Hague, and stated in my other letter, have originally been founded in misapprehension, or at least that the conduct now pursued by the Court of France will be strictly conformable to the language of its minister.

Upon that ground, this Court could have no scruple to meet that of France with the most unqualified concurrence. It has never entered into our thoughts to interpose the slightest controul over any part of the Republick, and we should see with infinite satisfaction the assurances realized, which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin has given, of His Most Christian Majesty's fixed resolution to use the same kind of forbearance.

You will understand from what I have stated, and will, I hope, be able to satisfy the French Court, how much His Majesty is in earnest in wishing to preserve tranquillity, if France is really in the same sentiments, and I trust that great object may be obtained. But you will also learn from the instructions in my former letter that you are not to attempt to remove the idea that His Majesty will be prepared to act as the occasion may require, if the conduct of France should ultimately prove different from that which her professions give us a right to expect.

P.S.—The Duke of Dorset will have communicated to you my dispatch to His Grace no. 9 of the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. It is very material to be informed, as accurately as possible, on the several objects of enquiry recommended therein, and I am in hopes, as some progress will probably have been made in your joint researches, that you will be able at your return to answer the several questions contained in that letter, particularly on the state of the French army and navy, the number and size of the ships actually fit for immediate service, the number and size of those now building, and their different degrees of preparation, as well as the state of the naval magazines of stores and provisions.

I must desire you will communicate to the Duke of Dorset the contents of the several dispatches sent you by this messenger.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 22.*)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET.

Whitehall, 1 July 1787.

[No. 12.]

In addition to the instructions sent to M<sup>r</sup>. Eden yesterday and which he was ordered to communicate to Your Grace, it appears on recurring to M<sup>r</sup>. Eden's correspondence that there is one point on which it seems more particularly necessary to call Your Grace's attention.

The question upon which more distinct information would be important to us seems to be what M<sup>o</sup><sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin would have us understand by those passages in his conversation wherein he looks to the case of *the national honor of France being brought into question*.

Supposing France to have formed a defensive alliance with the whole Republick of the United Provinces, any hostile measure to



an ally, so described, might with colour fair enough be stated as a *casus foederis*.

Although the last treaty between France and Holland did not perfectly answer that description, yet the measure of enmity mentioned before might also be treated in the same manner, while France affects to consider that treaty in that light.

But if, under colour of that treaty, France means that she is called upon to maintain the cause of Holland by force against the other provinces, that seems to be a direct claim to use that *open interference in the troubles of the Provinces* which he objects to on our part, and which we collected from thence that he meant to disclaim, because his objection was urged with equal justice and emphasis that *the principle of such an interference was indefensible and would infallibly and justly become reciprocal*. It would also be a breach of the treaty of alliance, so far as that relates to those States against whom such exertions would be directed.

You will see by the inclosure sent you herewith that the spirits of the revolvers are kept up by the expectation of *such open interference* on the part of France. We hope to find that expectation has been raised by rumour or false suggestion, or at most by the assurances of persons not avowed, because it would little become so respectable a character as Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin to hold this language in his conference with you, and at the same time to give or permit assurances to be given to Holland of a contrary effect.

This seems to be the most immediate point in discussing which that general expression may be exemplified. But it is material to know in all views what Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin means to represent as the nature and extent of those engagements and consequently of those cases in which their point of honor may be committed.

(*Ibid.*)

Whitehall, 3 July 1787.

No. 13.

I last night received Your Grace's dispatch no. 48, intimating a resolution of the Court of Versailles to form an army, to consist of twenty five battalions, at Givet.

I have likewise received information of orders having been sent to Brest about the 16th June, for the immediate equipment of twelve ships of the line and the preparing several others.

It is impossible not to be struck with the very rumour of measures

of this nature, at all times sufficient to create some degree of jealousy and suspicion, and particularly striking at this period. I have no doubt that Your Grace will receive the clearest explanation on these subjects because they are perfectly incompatible with the language which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin held on the 19th of June with Mr. Eden, and with Your Grace so late as the 26th, and to those assurances which the French Government have repeatedly expressed, of the pacific disposition of that Court, and it's earnest desire to preserve and promote the friendly intercourse with England so happily and so recently re-established.

I have already explained to Mr. Eden the appearances which seemed to excite the jealousy of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin. In fact that jealousy gave me no little surprize, as the occasion of it was no more than the sending out a few guardships to manœuvre, which during the last peace repeatedly happened without them giving the least cause of alarm.

The orders now sent to Brest (if our accounts are authentic) are of a very different nature, and such as must, if persisted in, occasion like preparations on our side, as, independently of every other consideration, such a step must, with just reason, lead to what Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin mentioned to Mr. Eden, a recommencement of jealousies and expence between the two Kingdoms. It will therefore be necessary for Your Grace to have immediately a very distinct explanation on this subject.

[For a despatch from Carmarthen to Eden, dated Whitehall, 18 July 1786, see *Journal and Correspondence of William first Lord Auckland*, Vol. I, p. 489.]

(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 22.)

Whitehall, 27 July 1787.

No. 16.

. . . . I have the King's commands to direct Your Grace to express to the French ministers that altho' His Majesty receives with satisfaction the continued assurances of the friendly and pacific dispositions of the Court of Versailles, he cannot but lament from a sincere desire to avoid, if he can, every occasion of misunderstanding, that His Most Christian Majesty should not have judged it proper under the present circumstances to agree explicitly to the proposal made by His Majesty for the suspension of those preparations which, at the same time that they occasioned expence to both

countries, hold forth the appearance of mutual jealousy and distrust.

The assurances given in His Majesty's name respecting his naval preparations, have been so full and explicit, that he trusts it is impossible for a moment's credit to be given to any reports of steps having been taken beyond those already explained. But on the other hand the explanation now given by the Court of France, coupled by their former communication, is, it must be confessed, far from being equally satisfactory.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin indeed states that only six ships will actually be armed, but it had been before acknowledged that orders had been sent for putting a certain number (not specified) *en état d'être armé*, and this phrase is now no otherwise explained but by saying that it is supposed to mean the same as the expression here of putting ships in commission. This expression, as we understand it, may include any degree of preparation necessary for immediate service, and the extent to which it may be carried is not limited. His Majesty trusts that the intention of the Court of France has not been such as the words appear to convey, and that that Court will feel how impossible it will be for His Majesty under such circumstances to continue to avoid further preparations, unless, in return to those assurances which he has already given and which Your Grace is authorized to repeat, he receives immediate assurances from the Court of France that no naval preparations of any sort or degree are making in the French ports beyond the usual objects of their peace establishment, except for the purpose of equipping the six ships already mentioned. Your Grace will not fail immediately to state this, in the most friendly and at the same time the most explicit terms, and you will use your utmost endeavours to procure a distinct and immediate answer, as His Majesty's future conduct must depend upon this point being fully and speedily ascertained.

It is also His Majesty's pleasure that Your Grace should express the surprize and concern which is felt here from observing that in several parts of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's dispatch, the intention of assembling a force at Givet, which was before explained to have no other object but that of instructing the troops, is declared to be adopted with a view to produce an effect in the present situation of the Republick, that His Most Christian Majesty appears now to consider his character of an ally of the Republick as intituling him

to interfere in cases where he may be of opinion that the security of the Republick, whether external or internal, is endangered ; and that the case of danger, to which this principle is particularly applied in the reasoning of the French minister, appears to be that which results from their internal dissentions.

The offer made in Mr. de Montmorin's letter of changing the place of cantonment of the troops to be assembled in France, or of countermanding it is only in case a suspension of hostilities shall have taken place in the manner pointed out by the French Court. An explanation is given of those principles which, in the opinion of the French government, may then form the basis of conciliation, and with a view to such a negotiation, His Majesty is exhorted by His Most Christian Majesty to use his influence for placing things in the Republick in such a situation as is stated in that letter.

On these several points, my Lord, I have the King's commands to acquaint Your Grace that he by no means conceives that the proposition made by France, that the different provinces should retain only their ordinary garrisons ; that Holland should withdraw her cordon and the troops which she has sent to Utrecht, and that the Free Corps who have marched into that city should also withdraw themselves, is calculated to produce such a suspension of hostilities as might be just and reasonable previous to an adjustment of the differences of the Republick, whether by an accommodation between the provinces, without foreign intervention, or by the mediation of any other powers. Your Grace will observe that, on such an idea, the Free Corps, altho' withdrawn from Utrecht, would be continued in that possession which they have acquired by force of the different towns of the province of Holland, whose deliberations they have thus been able to influence, while on the other hand, the troops under the orders of the States-General, would be almost wholly withdrawn from those provinces which are defended by them. The just idea of a suspension of hostilities with a view to negotiation is unquestionably this, that both parties should remain precisely in the same situation as they now stand, but should agree to suspend the making use of the advantages which that situation may afford. Even this is in some degree a concession from those whose present situation is that of actual superiority of force, but anything beyond this would be conceding with a view to negotiation, what ought to be yielded only in the event of accommodation and of a general pacification.

The only means by which a suspension of hostilities could be effected on the footing proposed by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin with any degree of equality would be that the Free Corps should be disarmed. Such a measure may possibly be difficult in the present moment, but His Majesty could not think himself justified to propose to the States-General the withdrawing their troops, unaccompanied by this measure, nor could he do it, as he believes, with any prospect of success.

With respect to the principles of a negotiation on this subject, supposing the preliminary steps were mutually agreed upon, His Majesty has never had any idea of interfering by his mediation, except in the case of his receiving an invitation for that purpose. He conceives that to be the only manner in which an intervention on the part of a foreign power in the internal dissensions of the Republick, can be justified. He had understood this to be a principle in which the two Courts were explicitly agreed, and he is therefore at a loss what constructions to put upon those expressions in Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's letter which speak of steps to be taken by the Most Christian King to prevent the evil effects of a rejection of his mediation on the part of any of the Provinces.

It is impossible to imagine that they can refer to any measures of force, considering the language so explicitly held by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin and adopted by this Court, that the principle of such interference was indefensible and that it must infallibly and justly become reciprocal. If His Majesty should be invited to take part in any mediation, his conduct will, on every occasion in which he can act with propriety, be directed to the maintenance of the true spirit of the constitution of the Republick as it was settled in 1747 by an unanimous vote, and confirmed in 1766 in a manner equally unanimous.

But if, consistently with this principle, there are any points relating either to the office and functions of the Stadtholder, or to the internal constitution of the different Provinces, in which it shall be thought that the changes can be made with propriety and safety, His Majesty is of opinion that these objects as well as the other measures necessary to restore the Republick to the state of a peaceable and well ordered government, may with propriety be discussed either with or without the intervention of other powers, during such a suspension as is above pointed out, consisting in an agreement between the different parties in the Republick to forbear acting, but not to abandon the means of action.



The sentiments which Your Grace is here directed to convey are dictated by the same motives which have influenced His Majesty's conduct in every part of this discussion. He is persuaded that the communicating them openly and frankly is the most likely way to avoid causes of mutual suspicion, and he entertains a just hope that they will meet with such a return as may be expected from the pacific and friendly disposition expressed by both Courts, and as may ensure the continuance of that harmony and good understanding which is so much for their mutual interests.

P.S. Your Grace will be pleased to communicate this despatch to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 25.*)

CARMARTHEN TO EDEN.

Whitehall, 10 August 1787.<sup>1</sup>

No. 23.

. . . . . The terms of the explanations and assurances given by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin appear explicit and satisfactory, and you may in return assure that minister that His Majesty will in consequence abstain from making any further preparations of any sort in the ports of this Kingdom, unless any new occasion arises to make it necessary, and you may also add that His Majesty entirely approves of the idea proposed that, if either Court changes its intention respecting naval preparations it should give immediate notice to the other.

I cannot however omit mentioning to you that, were it not for the explicit assurances of the French minister, in which we are disposed to put the greatest confidence, a circumstance has happened here which would justify a considerable degree of suspicion. Information has been received of ships entering out for Brest from the Port of London, laden with provisions in quantities sufficient for the subsistence of a crew of a large fleet for several weeks.

After what has passed with the Court of France, it has been thought right, in order to avoid the appearance of distrust, and as it is understood the ships are not sailing immediately, not to issue any proclamation for stopping them, which would have been done otherwise ; but it is His Majesty's pleasure that you should represent this in a proper manner to the French minister, and endeavour

<sup>1</sup> The rough draft of this despatch is in Pitt's hand.

to procure from him a satisfactory explanation, or, if the order is on account of Government, prevail on him to countermand or suspend it.

You should also state that accounts have been received of preparations at Cherbourg, of a nature to occasion jealousy, and express His Majesty's hope and expectation from what has passed that they will have been laid aside.

It is likewise reported that several transports have been sent from Holland to Dunkirk with as much secrecy as possible, in order to receive a body of French troops to be conveyed to Amsterdam. A report so totally inconsistent with the repeated assurances of France respecting her wishes not to interfere by force in the troubles of the Republic, is of course treated by this government in the manner it deserves, and the open communication of it to France, must appear an additional instance of the open manner in which we wish to treat with that Court, and affords them an opportunity of removing any impressions such a rumour may produce on the minds of the public in general either in Holland or elsewhere. I mention Holland, because a report of this nature would probably produce in that country the greatest obstruction to the great work of conciliation, which it is so much the object of the two Courts to forward and promote.

With respect to the assembly of troops at Givet or anywhere else towards the frontier of the Republic, I can only refer you to my former instructions of July 10th to the Duke of Dorset on this subject, by which you will perceive that His Majesty's assurance of abstaining from naval preparation was on the condition that the troops should not be assembled at Givet. If unfortunately that measure should take place, His Majesty will still hold himself at liberty to make such preparations as he may judge necessary. At the same time, after the mutual explanation which has now been given, His Majesty would not even in that case make any further naval preparations without giving notice to the Court of France.

I am here also under the painful necessity of adding that the conduct held in the Province of Holland, apparently instigated by those who have all along appeared the instruments of France, seems to increase instead of diminishing in violence. I inclose a copy of an address presented by the Free Corps of that Province which it is intended you should shew to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin. It

cannot escape that minister how little such a step is calculated to promote an accommodation or a suspension of hostilities which his language so strongly recommends. I have thought it necessary to state these particulars without loss of time, but I must defer for a short time replying in detail to the contents of your dispatches, as I expect in a few days the information from Holland which is necessary both with a view to an accurate discussion of the terms and mode of negociation and to the practicability of a cessation of hostilities preparatory to it, which has been one of the particular objects of the enquiries which His Majesty has directed.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 25.)

Whitehall, 24 August 1787.

No. 26.

. . . . . I have already expressed His Majesty's approbation of the proposal that no farther naval armaments should be made in the present circumstances in the ports either of Great Britain or France without previous notice from one country to the other. His Majesty considers this as a point agreed to, and you are authorized to exchange a ministerial assurance to this effect, in whatever form is thought best. . . . . It might on many accounts be desirable that this agreement should be made permanent, but as the possible difficulties which might occur in doing so would require some farther consideration, it is wished in the meantime and without delay to make the agreement with reference to the present circumstances. As to the idea of disarming on each side the six ships by agreement, it is inapplicable to our situation, as in fact, our ships are no new armament, but a part only of our ordinary peace establishment.

The assurances and explanations respecting the provisions entered outwards for Brest, the preparations at Cherbourg and the troops at Dunkirk seem as direct and satisfactory as could be desired. At the same time you will keep a watchfull attention to everything that relates to these points, and particularly to whatever you may learn to be passing at Dunkirk, on which subject I inclose to you a report transmitted to me by Sir James Harris. You may perhaps be able to remove every doubt upon these subjects by learning the number of troops actually in garrison at Cherbourg and Dunkirk.

<sup>2<sup>nd</sup></sup>ly. *Givet*. The idea of assembling troops at Givet, which has in the correspondence between the two Courts already received

different explanations from that of France, is now distinctly rested on the ground of its being rendered necessary by the march of Prussian troops, and it is added that the number first talked of may even be augmented. The march of the Prussian troops was certainly not a measure which originated in any suggestion from hence, and the reports which you refer to on that subject are in that extent ill-founded. But it is true, and you will state it explicitly to the French ministers, that His Majesty did not hesitate to express his entire approbation of the resolution manifested by the King of Prussia to enforce satisfaction for the insult offered to the Princess of Orange. It is His Majesty's earnest wish that this satisfaction may be obtained without having recourse to extremities, and His Majesty would gladly contribute by all the means in his power to its being amicably arranged; but while the party in Holland persists in refusing this just demand, it appears to His Majesty perfectly just and natural that the King of Prussia should take the necessary steps for enabling him to support it with effect. There is not the smallest foundation for the representation which you suppose to have been made by M<sup>r</sup>. Barthelemy to his Court, that His Majesty's ministers had admitted the propriety of a French army being assembled in consequence of the measures of the King of Prussia. On the contrary, it appears to His Majesty's servants that the Court of France can certainly have no interest in opposing this demand, it being impossible to imagine that any end can be answered by countenancing a personal insult to the King of Prussia, or that France can wish to throw obstructions in the way of conciliatory measures by forcing him to extremities on a point where his honor is immediately concerned. The terms of a defensive alliance with the States-General cannot impose any obligation or even furnish any pretext for supporting a party in the Province of Holland in the consequences of such an insult, in which they not only stand separate from the Confederacy, but in direct contradiction to the opinion of the majority of the States-General. It will therefore give His Majesty great concern if the French Court should on this occasion adopt a measure which may lead to the most disagreeable consequences. I have already stated that the operation of the Prussian troops can give no ground for such a measure, but if the Court of France feel differently on this subject, it should be an additional reason with them to endeavour to prevail on the party in Holland no longer to oppose such a

reparation as the King of Prussia can in honor accept, in order to open the way for a pacific and secure discussion of the several internal points to be adjusted in the Republick.

3<sup>d</sup>. *Suspension of hostilities.* The next step towards this object is to settle a suspension of hostilities in the Provinces. Of the three modes mentioned in the minutes of conversation discussed between you and Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin, the 2<sup>nd</sup>. is that to which I stated such objections in my no. [23] as appeared to make it wholly inexpedient. The difficulty which it was conceived might exist respecting the Free Corps induced His Majesty's ministers to resort to that which is stated by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin as the third mode. It is clearly preferable to the second, but is certainly defective and liable to the remarks made upon it by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin. There is therefore no doubt that the first of the three modes stated in the minutes, namely, that of breaking up the cordons, withdrawing out of the several Provinces all the troops but their ordinary garrisons (making a provision as is hereafter mentioned for those troops which have been struck off by the Province of Holland) and disarming the Free Corps, is much the most effectual way of securing tranquillity during a mediation. It may certainly be reduced to practice if the several parties can be brought sincerely to wish a real cessation of hostilities, and it may be so regulated as to give no advantage to either party if the negotiation should fail, but to place them again in the same relative situation as that in which they actually stand.

For this purpose it seems proper to propose that at the same time that measures are taken for removing the regular troops, the several Free Corps should, on a day to be named, deliver up their arms to commissaries to be fixed for that purpose by the three mediating powers; that these arms shall remain, during the continuance of the negotiation, in the custody of the commissaries under the sanction of these powers, who shall agree to take joint measures to prevent either party from getting possession of them, and to consider any attempt to do so as an act of hostility which they shall all unite to punish; that in the event of an amicable accommodation, these arms shall be disposed of as shall be agreed upon, but that in case of the negotiation breaking off, they shall be returned by the same commissaries to the persons from whom they are received, within a limited time from the breaking off of the conferences. This proceeding appears to His Majesty's ministers



unexceptionable and they think it ought to give satisfaction. You will lose no time in learning the sentiments of the French ministers upon it, and measures will in the meantime be taken to ascertain how far the Prince of Orange and the four Provinces would be disposed to adopt it. I cannot however conclude this subject without observing that the whole of the conduct recently pursued by the province of Holland is calculated to put every idea of a cessation of hostilities at a great distance. The increased activity of those who appear to be the instruments of France, the new levies which are rapidly carried forward, the movements of the Free Corps, who probably before this time have directed their outrages against The Hague and particularly the numbers of French soldiers who have found their way into the Republick in a manner so notorious as to become the subject of a representation from the States-General to the Court of France, are points to which you should advert in the most serious manner in your conferences with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin, as making the impression here which might naturally be expected in the present moment.

4<sup>th</sup>. *Principles of accommodation.* With respect to the 4<sup>th</sup> point, you will state to the French ministers that the general principles which, in His Majesty's opinion, ought to be taken as the basis of a mediation, are those which are contained in the King of Prussia's *note verbale* delivered to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Falciola. These preliminaries appear to His Majesty perfectly just and reasonable. I have therefore only to mention on this subject a few additions and explanations founded on the same principles and relating to the two general heads mentioned by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin of the disputes between the Province of Holland and the Stadtholder and the change of the *règlemens* in the three provinces of Guelderland, Utrecht and Overyssel.

With respect to this latter point, it is stated in the preliminaries of Prussia, and it cannot be too distinctly understood between the three Courts, that there is not the least pretence for the interference of Holland in the internal constitution of these Provinces. Neither can it be admitted that it is proper that the mediating powers should agree beforehand that these *règlemens* shall absolutely undergo some change. It is necessary that the States of those Provinces should be placed in a situation to deliberate upon them with perfect liberty. The utmost that can be expected, in the present state of the business, would be that the Prince should

declare himself ready in such case to discuss these *règlements bonâ fide* and freely with the Provincial States and to agree to any alterations in them which may be desired by the States and may appear to him on such discussion to be just and reasonable. But certainly it cannot be proposed to him previously to pledge himself that the *règlements* shall be altered in some indefinite manner, perhaps even in contradiction to the real wishes of the Provinces themselves, by whom alone such alteration could be made, with the consent of the Stadtholder.

It is stated in His Prussian Majesty's third preliminary that the chief object of a mediation would be the differences between the Province of Holland and the Stadtholder, and that these should be regulated according to the principles there laid down. This appears to His Majesty perfectly just, but he also thinks it right that the Provinces of Overijssel and Groningen should be comprized in the same discussion. There could be no objection on his part to the proposal of taking for the basis of the negotiation on this subject the restoration of the Prince of Orange to his situation and power as enjoyed by him in 1766. But it cannot be proper in this case, any more than in the former, to engage beforehand and absolutely that there is a necessity of making some reform. The functions of a mediation would, I apprehend, consist in receiving and examining any proposal that should be made for such a reform. It is amply sufficient for the purposes of conciliation if it is understood that H.S.H. is to be restored to those high dignities of which he has been dispossessed, and that any differences between him and the Provinces above named shall be regulated according to the principles of equity and to the real interests and constitution of the respective States.

The several points which should form the basis of a negotiation, appear, according to what has been stated above, to be as follows, vizt.

1. That an entire suspension of all hostilities should be agreed on by the two parties in the Republick. That the States of Holland should recall from the Province of Utrecht all their troops, as well regulars as Free Corps. That with respect to those troops on the repartition of Holland which have gone over to the Generality, these should be stationed in some place to be agreed upon and their pay provided for. That the different towns in Holland, Utrecht and Guelderland should be stationed in some place to be agreed

upon and their pay provided for. That the different towns in Holland, Utrecht and Guelderland should retain only their ordinary garrisons to be composed of such troops as shall be settled between the two parties ; and that the Free Corps shall deliver up their arms to be lodged in some safe deposit under the inspection and guaranty of the mediating powers ; to remain there during the negotiations and to be restored if the conferences should terminate unfavorably.

2. That it shall be distinctly understood that the three Provinces "*à reglemens*" shall be left entirely at liberty to deliberate freely and according to the forms of their constitution on that subject, and that Holland has no claim or pretence to interfere in their internal government.

3. That the differences between the Prince of Orange and the respective States of Holland, Overysse and Groningen, shall be regulated by the mediating powers on the principles of equity and the real interests and constitution of those Provinces, taking always on the basis of the restoration of the Prince to his situation and dignities as confirmed to him in 1766 and particularly to the office of Captain General and to the command of the garrison of The Hague.

4. Any other points which shall still remain to be adjusted and are not included in the above, may be settled by the intervention of the mediating powers or in such other manner as shall be agreed upon. But it will be absolutely necessary that, during the negotiation, as well the violence of the libels which are daily circulating, as also all other measures of aggression, should be stopped. And it appears of the utmost importance, with a view to the suspension of hostilities and the commencement of a negotiation, that the Court of France shall use her endeavours to prevail on the States of Holland to agree on some reparation for the insult offered to His Prussian Majesty which may be satisfactory to him.

These appear to be the general principles on which a negotiation should be founded. The idea contained in the minutes to which you refer, of admitting, as a basis, the constitution as it stood at a certain period, but engaging at the same time for some indefinite alterations and of regulating the future functions of the Stadtholder by an instruction, the particular objects of which are not explained, is so vague and general that it is impossible to understand precisely its nature and tendency. If there are any particular points

which may appear to France to require discussion or regulation, they should be distinctly stated and will be considered with proper attention.

In what I have mentioned to you on this subject, I have taken no notice of two points on which it is necessary that I should state to you the King's instructions altho' they do not immediately relate to the questions in discussion: I mean the language which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin allows himself to hold in all his conferences with you, as well as in the papers which pass between the two Courts with respect to the conduct of His Serene Highness the Prince of Orange; and the principle which is stated in his letter to Mo<sup>r</sup>. Barthelemy that the Prince is to be considered only as the servant of the several Provinces.

There is no foundation for the reflections on the conduct of the Prince, nor could it be expected that the atrocious libels which have been circulated in the Republick to calumniate his character, should be so far countenanced by a respectable and enlightened Court like that of France as to be in some measure adopted in their publick communications, especially to the ministers of a sovereign so nearly allied as the King is to His Serene Highness.

You will be particularly careful therefore to suffer no insinuation of that nature to be made in any conferences with you without expressly stating how unfounded and improper they are felt to be.

The second point is of a nature purely speculative and of little importance, unless any consequences were to be deduced from it in the proposed negotiation. If that should be the case, it would not be difficult to prove that the Stadtholder is an original and integral part of the Dutch constitution, and the person holding that high office by hereditary right stands in a rank and consideration very different from that which has been ascribed to him by the ministers of France.

5. I explained to you in my last dispatch that it was by no means His Majesty's wish you should discourage the idea of mediation, and considering the animosity between the two parties in the Republick, it seems difficult that any other means should be found to effect an accommodation.

[For a despatch from Carmarthen to Eden dated Whitehall, 19 September 1787 (by printer's error dated the 13th) see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 524.]

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 26.*)

CARMARTHEN TO W. W. GRENVILLE.<sup>1</sup>

Whitehall, 21 September 1787.

No. 1.

The communication made by the Court of France of their determination to give an avowed assistance to Holland in consequence of the representations received from thence, renders it very uncertain whether the crisis will now admit of farther negotiation on the subject of the affairs of the Republick. It also appears doubtful from what has recently passed whether there exists any real disposition in the French Government to agree to reasonable terms of accommodation. His Majesty has therefore thought it necessary to make such preparations as may best enable him to counteract the armed interference of France, if it should actually take place, as appears at present highly probable. At the same time, in order to leave nothing untried which can conduce to a favourable termination of this business, and continue to his subjects the secure and permanent enjoyment of the blessings of peace, His Majesty is desirous to employ the short interval which may yet remain before things are unavoidably brought to extremities, to come if possible to a precise and distinct explanation with the French government on the several points on which an accommodation can be effected.

With this view, His Majesty has thought proper to direct that you should repair immediately to the Court of France in order to learn whether such an explanation can be entered upon with a prospect of success. On your arrival, you will state to the French ministers the general object of your commission as above explained.

The instructions given to Mr. Eden since his last return to Paris and particularly in my dispatch of the 24th of August and in that of yesterday's date, which I have had His Majesty's directions to communicate to you, will inform you of the King's sentiments on the present situation of the Republick, and you are also furnished with a copy of my dispatch to Mr. Ewart, which will explain the nature and object of the concert which His Majesty has proposed to form with the King of Prussia.

From the result of these papers, you will perceive that there are two leading points to which your attention must be directed. These are the satisfaction claimed by the King of Prussia for the insult

<sup>1</sup> Sent on a mission in connexion with the affairs of Holland.



which has been offered to the Princess of Orange, and the terms on which tranquillity may be restored to the Republick. With regard to the first, His Majesty has always directed his ministers to maintain the right of the King of Prussia to a just reparation, and to express the impossibility of his acquiescing in any armed interference of France on this subject, which would have for its avowed object to support the usurped government of Holland against the sentiments of the States General, and would in fact tend to establish an influence there in the highest degree dangerous to the interests of this country. It is at present uncertain how far the operations of the Prussian Army may have succeeded either in obtaining a compliance with His Prussian Majesty's demands or in satisfying his intentions in this respect ; but if this should still remain a subject of negotiation, you will be careful to state that His Majesty cannot agree to any final settlement of which it shall not make a part. You will however perceive from the instructions to Mr. Ewart that the King is sincerely desirous that every possible facility should be afforded on this subject if there is a prospect that the other points in negotiation can be satisfactorily arranged. You will learn from Mr. Ewart the result of the communication he is to make at Berlin on that subject, and 'till you are informed of this, you will not pledge the opinions of His Majesty's servants upon it, but you will at the same time endeavour to lead the French ministers to state what they can engage for on this head, and according to the accounts you receive from Berlin, you will use your discretion in agreeing to any proposal on this subject if the other points can be arranged conformably to the purport of these instructions.

With respect to the differences in the United Provinces, the leading object which His Majesty has uniformly had in view, is to bring about such an amicable adjustment of this business as may preserve the actual constitution of the Republick in its essential points, and prevent it's weight and authority being transferred to the hands of those who might probably employ it in a manner injurious to the interests of His Majesty's dominions. This view cannot be too distinctly stated to the Court of France, nor ought it to be disguised that they can have no other motive in pursuing a contrary object but to acquire an influence which can be useful to themselves only in proportion as it is capable of being directed against Great Britain. There can therefore in truth be no prospect of

an amicable settlement unless the Court of France feels that such an object is not one which ought to induce her in the present moment to risk the consequences of a contest with Great Britain.

At the same time, in conveying these sentiments, every proper attention should be used towards the French government and their feelings and wishes should be consulted as far as possible in the mode of arranging this business, provided the substantial object is obtained.

You will perceive that the principles of negotiation as explained in my last letter to Mr. Eden, the form of His Majesty's proposals is accommodated as much as possible to the language which appears at different times to have been held by Mr. de Montmorin, and you will endeavour in your conferences with that minister to take all possible advantage of this circumstance. The several heads under which the points in discussion have hitherto been treated will appear from the papers to which I have already referred.

The measure of disbanding the Free Corps is absolutely essential to restore tranquillity to the Republic. The alledged impracticability of doing this previous to a negotiation is the only material objection which has been distinctly stated to any of our proposals by Mr. de Montmorin. But this difficulty would be avoided, if, instead of a cessation of hostilities previous to negotiating, the matters in discussion can be brought at once to that short and distinct issue which can alone be suited to the circumstances of the present moment. As a part of the final settlement, Mr. de Montmorin has himself acknowledged that the Free Corps must in effect be disarmed.

I have nothing to add to what is said to Mr. Eden on the subject of a provision for the pay of the troops struck off from the service of the Province of Holland, and the withdrawing the other troops into their ordinary garrisons.

The principle that Holland has no claim to interfere in the constitution of the other Provinces has been admitted by Mr. de Montmorin. It is also acknowledged that the Stadtholder should be restored to his situation and dignities as confirmed to him in 1766.

With respect to any alterations that may be admitted in the *règlements*, these must be referred to the free deliberation of the States in concert with the Stadtholder. There seems however to be no objection if you find it useful, to state that an alteration of

some smaller particulars in these *règlemens* may be thought expedient by the Stadtholder and the Provincial States, but that these can by no means go to the extent of any change in the real government of those Provinces. And if there should be any such points which the French minister is desirous to specify, and the communications which Sir James Harris is directed to hold with you should shew that they may be safely agreed to, you may express the King's readiness to join in any proper mode of recommending them for the consideration of the Stadtholder and of the States deliberating freely and according to the terms of their constitution.

The restoration of the Prince must be entire, but a similar recommendation to that above mentioned may be stipulated on the subject of the military jurisdiction and the *patentes* for the march of troops. On these two points of the military jurisdiction and the *patentes* you may also agree to a recommendation of the particular regulations to be discussed, if you should learn from Sir James Harris that it can be done with propriety.

In order to secure the free deliberations of the Provincial States as above mentioned, it is particularly necessary to attend to the proposal for restoring the lawful magistrates to the exercise of their functions according to the constitution. This object is one that cannot be departed from, and it must always be stated as a necessary preliminary to the deliberation of the States on the other points.

After explaining His Majesty's sentiments on the several heads, you will endeavour to impress the French ministers with a sense of the absolute necessity of some immediate adjustment. It is His Majesty's most earnest and anxious desire that this should if possible be accomplished in conformity to the principles above stated. If there is any disposition to discuss the subject fairly, it may be brought to a clear issue in a very short time, and any attempt to protract the negotiation by fruitless discussions, must on every account be discouraged.

It is not however His Majesty's intention that you should (without further directions) agree to any proposals on this subject, unless you should find the Prussian minister at Paris instructed to concur with you; but if that should be the case, and the Prussian minister and the French Government should be ready to join in a declaration conformable to the tenor of these instructions, you are hereby authorised to sign the same without delay, and

previous to doing so you will produce the secret credentials with which you are furnished.

[For a despatch of Carmarthen to Eden, dated Whitehall, 21 September 1787, see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 199.]

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 26.)

Whitehall, 23 September 1787.

No. 2.

By Mr. Eden's dispatch received this morning it appears that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin has expressed himself in a manner which seems to promise that the present situation will not lead to a war.

He has stated it confidentially as his opinion that "if the State of Holland should prove so defenceless or so intimidated as to give way to whatever might be forced under the present attack, he should advise the Most Christian King not to engage in a war, but protesting against the conduct, to give refuge and protection at any practicable expence to all who might be driven from their country and might seek it. On the contrary: if the situation of things should prove such as give a prospect of assisting with a hope of maintaining the Dutch constitution, and to protect an allied province against a foreign attack, he would advise France to do it by all means within her power."

He has also stated that he personally never approved of the pursuit in Holland, and has sought, but in vain, every practicable way to get out of it creditably.

As by the accounts from Holland (the last of which was sent to you last night) the actual situation of affairs seems to be that which Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin has put as a supposition, and as from the dates he must have been acquainted at least with the first successes of the Prussian troops at the time of his conversation, there is great reason to hope that the Court of France will acquiesce without a struggle in the consequence of the revolution which seems nearly completed in Holland.

It is however extremely difficult to judge at this moment, and while new events may arise from day to day, what mode of settlement between the two Courts even this disposition of Mo<sup>r</sup>. Montmorin's may produce.

It is not clear from his expressions as reported whether from finding the object of France in Holland defeated, he may not be

inclined to abandon everything there to the course of events rather than be a party in any shape to a settlement which must give up in substance the points which he has been so long pursuing.

Besides this it is doubtful whether the Revolution in Holland will leave a possibility (however we may still wish it) to effect even those modifications pointed at in your instructions.

The absolute restoration of the Stadtholder, the actual disarming of the Free Corps, which will probably take place whenever the Prussian operations can reach, and the change in the sentiments of the States of Holland, which are no longer likely to wish to interfere with the *règlements* and the constitutions of the other Provinces, may leave nothing to be the subject of mediation, unless the resistance at Amsterdam should prove successful and the party in the Province which has taken refuge there should be considerable enough to make some negotiation and some sort of compromise still desirable.

If the mediation should be out of the question, nothing can be more to be wished than that the Court of France should withdraw itself wholly from this business, and the advantages which will in that case be secured without a contest will undoubtedly be highly important and satisfactory.

But upon the whole His Majesty's servants are inclined to think that a sullen acquiescence of this sort in the present moment, might too naturally tend to some future struggle, and that no issue to this business is so desirable as that it should if possible be settled on the principles of your instructions with an appearance at least of the compleat and cordial concurrence of the Court of France. If Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin really feels, as there seems to be great reason to believe, that the pursuit in Holland was never judicious, and if his Court adopts his opinion, there is an end of the whole cause of dispute with Great Britain.

His temper may perhaps lead him to avow with a good grace, this opinion, and the change of system to which it leads. His Majesty's ministers would be sincerely desirous to improve such an opening, and to do every thing on their part to make this line as easy and practicable to the Court of France as possible.

I have stated thus much in order to apprise you of the general sentiment of His Majesty's ministers on the present view of affairs. The reasons I had already mentioned make it impossible to be more particular at present on all the various points which may



occur, but a few days may I hope enable me to send you further instructions.

In the mean time I inclose the dispatches which I shall send this day to Sir James Harris and you will most likely learn from him what probability there is, as far as depends on the state of affairs in the Republic, that a mediation may take place on the principles we have stated. It may perhaps be possible to find a farther opening for gratifying the feelings and in some sort saving the honor of France if a compleat amnesty and security to those friends for whom France is interested, or at least for the greater part of them can be made part of the settlement. How far this is practicable must depend upon the actual posture of affairs as well as on the prevailing temper of the Republic. But if it can be effected and this should appear to the French Court both in point of honor and in motives of interest to be much preferable to take upon themselves the load of supporting those who might be driven from the Republic, the desire of securing this point may perhaps tempt them to make themselves party to the settlement, even though no other concession of consequence should be obtained. If the guarantee of the constitution as it stood in the year 1766 could be admitted as a basis coupled with a stipulation for this amnesty and perhaps with a recommendation of any of the other modifications which may be deemed admissible, it seems as if every object we have in view would be safely provided for and more simply than in the mode originally proposed. The circumstances I have already alluded to may supersede the necessity of a distinct stipulation on the leading points stated in your final instructions and in my former correspondence with Mr. Eden, as they are probably by this time carried into actual effect. If the resistance at Amsterdam should be such as to render this idea of a mediation more necessary than it would otherwise, it may furnish to France an opportunity (which in that case we should not neglect to improve) of concurring in it on such a basis as I have mentioned with more grace and effect. I must repeat however that all this is at present only stated as general information to assist you in your conferences with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin. The use to be made of the communication is referred entirely to your own discretion in which His Majesty's servants repose the fullest confidence.

It will certainly not escape you that any conversations which you may hold in the present circumstances can go to no conclusion

'till the situation of affairs in Holland is still more decisively ascertained, and that our sentiments should be stated as demonstrations of our sincere disposition on this subject, but not as conveying an offer of any specific terms for which we can now engage.

[For despatches of Carmarthen to Eden, dated Whitehall, 25 and 28 September 1787, see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, pp. 201 and 205.]

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 26.)

Whitehall, 2 October 1787.

No. 3.

By your despatch no. 2 received yesterday, the language held by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin in your conference with that minister seems materially different from what might have been expected as well from Mr. Eden's last accounts of his apparent disposition as from preceding circumstances which led to the commission on which you have been employed. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin now maintains that it is impossible for France to negotiate respecting the affairs of the Republick or with a view to disarming while the Prussian army remains in the Republick. But it cannot be forgotten that at the very moment of making their notification to this Court of their intention to act on the express supposition of the Prussian operations taking place, that notification was accompanied by a declaration of their wish that the negotiation with us respecting the settlement of the troubles in the Provinces should be carried on with the greatest activity.

The instructions to you were given in consequence of this intimation in order to shew that while His Majesty was making these preparations which the conduct of France rendered indispensable, he was disposed with the utmost readiness, to cooperate with the intention so strongly expressed on the part of France for effecting an amicable and proper settlement.

If the Court of France has now taken up the determination not to negotiate at all, under the very circumstances the prospect of which led them to invite negotiation in the manner I have already mentioned, it will certainly be neither wise nor becoming that any farther discussion should be solicited on the part of this country. If therefore on a farther interview with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin, you should not find any change in his sentiments in this respect, you

will express in terms of civility that altho' His Majesty will still be desirous on his part to embrace any proper opening for restoring a cordial good understanding between the two Courts, your stay can be productive of no advantage under the circumstances of such a determination in the Court of France, and that you have His Majesty's commands to return immediately to England.

From the manner however in which you mention Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's having listened to what you stated of the advantage of a settlement with a view to disarming, and from his not appearing averse to the idea of the guarantee of the constitution of 1766, it seems still possible that he may revert to the idea of endeavouring to come to an understanding with this country without waiting for the withdrawing of the Prussian army, especially if any explanation should take place respecting the affairs of Turkey. If Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin should express to you such a disposition and there should seem to be a probability either of his agreeing on admissible conditions to a guarantee of the constitution of the Republick or (which Sir James Harris seems to prefer) of the rights of the Stadtholder as settled in 1766, or of his consenting to a declaration of the sort suggested in Mr. Eden's dispatch no. 90 and approved of here, as explained in mine no. 37, you will in that case encourage the idea, and it will then be desirable that you should prolong your stay so as to receive from Mr. Ewart the sentiments of the Court of Berlin in consequence of the late communication made to them from hence. The signing of a declaration of the nature before alluded to, now seems upon the whole to be the simplest and safest way of settling the business, and, notwithstanding the doubts expressed in my dispatch no. 37, is judged preferable, under all the present circumstances and considering the sentiments of our friends in Holland, to a guarantee or any direct intervention of France in adjusting the terms of settlement in the Republick. If this mode should be practicable, I have nothing to add to the instructions you have already received respecting it. If Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin gives into it, and you learn from Mr. Ewart that the King of Prussia concurs in our adopting the measure, you will consider yourself at liberty to sign it.

If however this proposal for a declaration should appear impracticable, but there should appear an inclination to accede to the guarantee, such an opening ought to be improved, tho' the

measure may be somewhat more complicated and embarrassed. You will have learnt from Sir James Harris what I have already alluded to, that our friends in Holland wish the guarantee to apply only to the preservation of the Stadtholderate as established in 47 and 66, and not to the constitution at large. Sir James Harris's only remark on this subject is "that it is a distinction almost "without a difference, but which they wish to adopt from an apprehension they are under that a guaranty of the general constitution "would imply a degree of dependance and servitude humiliating to "them."

This distinction seems to require more explanation to judge of its effects. The other points connected with the guarantee (if the idea is brought forward) seem to relate to the security of Amsterdam from pillage, the security for the persons and property of the Patriots, and the withdrawing of the Prussian troops. As to the first and second Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin seems to have mentioned them as points to be provided for by the Stadtholder. The first may by this time be out of the question, as it is possible that the fate of Amsterdam may be decided but undoubtedly, if the attack has proved successful, every measure will have been taken to prevent outrage. As to the second point, you will have heard from Sir James Harris. By the dispatches I have received from him, there appears a disposition to agree to give a general security for the persons and properties of the patriots without exception, insisting only that the principal of them shall be disqualified from holding offices in future.

With regard to the withdrawing of the Prussian troops, it would be impossible to stipulate anything, or even to commit His Majesty on the subject, without previously consulting the King of Prussia. By a dispatch received yesterday from Mr. Ewart, dated 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept., it appears that the King of Prussia had written to the Duke of Brunswick not to retire till his success is compleat. This cannot be said to be the case, till Amsterdam has acceded to the terms required by the Duke of Brunswick, or until that Court has in some shape or other expressly disavowed any intention to have recourse to hostile measures. No decisive judgment can therefore be formed on this part of the subject at present, and consequently if the idea of the guaranty connected with the points I have mentioned should appear at all practicable, it must necessarily require some time by which an interval will be afforded for your hearing again

both from hence and The Hague. You judged perfectly right in not giving in any proposal in writing on this subject which might be binding on this Court, and in the discussion of any of the points here mentioned, you will be cautious of entering into any of the particulars unless you find the sentiments of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin such as to make you think that the explanation may be useful.

I have already alluded to the possibility that some advantage might be derived from an explanation relative to the state of affairs between the Porte and Russia, on which I observe that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin has more than once expressed a wish to learn the sentiments of His Majesty's servants. I perceive also that some idea is supposed by M<sup>r</sup>. Eden to be in contemplation of sending a French fleet to the Black Sea, but Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin does not appear to have been willing to make any communication of the views of the Court of France in respect to this object; nor does it even clearly appear which side this fleet is intended to favour. Independent of the circumstances of jealousy which appear unhappily to exist between this country and France, this reserve on the part of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin in withholding any explanation of the views of his own Court, while he is desirous to learn those which are entertained in this country, makes it difficult to enter into any particular communication on the subject. It may be sufficient at present to say that this country neither has any inducement, nor is under any engagement to enter at all into the quarrel between Russia and the Porte, and that His Majesty's uniform desire to promote the general tranquillity is what he never will deviate from, unless where the regard due to the safety of his dominions requires it. . . . .

[For a despatch from Carmarthen to Eden dated Whitehall, 8 October 1787, see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 218.]

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 26.)

CARMARTHEN TO EDEN.

Whitehall, 15 October 1787.

No. 44.

. . . . . If the Court of Berlin agrees to the idea of our disarming, under the present circumstances the paper marked (B)<sup>1</sup> may with some few alterations, furnish the means of bringing the

<sup>1</sup> A projected declaration drafted by Montmorin.



transaction now depending to so satisfactory an issue that, notwithstanding the sentiments expressed in my letter of yesterday, it is thought right to send you discretionary orders for bringing it to a conclusion.

I inclose copies of the papers in the shape you sent them, and also in the shape in which His Majesty's servants think they ought to stand. You will observe that the latter are in the form of a declaration and contre declaration, which is thought best adapted to the occasion. If agreed to, the declaration ought to be signed as well by the Duke of Dorset as yourself on His Majesty's part, and must be signed at the same time with the contre-declaration and be immediately exchanged. This step must not however be taken, unless you should have received information from Berlin which leaves no possible doubt that the measure has the full concurrence of the King of Prussia. . . . .

The objects of the alterations in the draught of Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's answer were, first, that it seems necessary he should declare not only that the French Court *never did*, but that it actually *does not* entertain an intention to interfere by force in Holland. 2<sup>d</sup>. That the first paragraph, as it stood, stated that Court to be now less disposed than formerly to interfere, because not called upon by the Republic. This might imply that she had been called upon before *by the Republic*, which is far from being the case. The expression has therefore been modified, and, as it now stands, it is of material use, as it admits that nothing but an invitation from the Republic could warrant an interference in future. 3<sup>d</sup>. That the words "*pour ces considérations, et vu les circonstances actuelles, Sa Majesté n'a pas dessein*" might be argued to imply that the design might be renewed under different circumstances. The actual circumstances may very properly be stated as occasioning the present determination, but that determination once taken, the engagement should be positive as it stands in the draught now sent you ("*qu' Elle ne donnera aucunes suites à la communication faite par Mo<sup>r</sup>. Barthelemy*"). 4<sup>th</sup>. That what relates to declaring the several communications *non avenues* must either be omitted entirely or made conformable to what has been before stated.

. . . . .  
The idea suggested of appointing commissaries to ascertain the disarming is not provided for expressly in the declaration, but it seems referred to, and it ought by all means to be encouraged.

I think it necessary to apprise you that His Majesty has given instructions to negotiate a defensive alliance with the Republic of the United Provinces. The Court of France has certainly no title (in consequence of the treaty between France and Holland which professes also to be defensive) to complain of such a measure, and I imagine there will be no disposition to do so; but in order to prevent any pretext for future misunderstanding, it is right that you should take some proper mode of apprising Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin of this circumstance, previous to signing the declaration.

. . . . .

(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 23.)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET AND EDEN.

Whitehall, 24 October 1787.

No. 2. Separate.

In my other dispatch<sup>1</sup> I have explained to you the necessity of providing by the declarations now to be exchanged for the disarming by land as well as by sea. This idea necessarily includes in it that the troops which have been sent to the coast of France on the present occasion (with the exception only of such as may ever in case of peace be intended to be embarked for the French possessions abroad) should be withdrawn into their ordinary stations, and likewise that no extraordinary number of troops should be collected towards the frontiers of the United Provinces.

Both these points so obviously result from the general tenour and even from the precise terms of the *projet* as now sent you that any further explanation is now hardly necessary; but in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, you will take an opportunity of stating in conversation that this is the sense in which His Majesty takes for granted the agreement will be executed.

For the reasons already given, I conceive it impossible Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin should state any difficulty in this respect; but if unexpectedly any such should arise, you will understand that it must be removed before signing the declarations; and it would in that case become necessary, in order to ascertain it in the most unequivocal manner, that you should give in a *note ministérielle* (previous to signing the declaration) to the effect of what you are above directed to state in conversation and that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin should either expressly agree to it, or at least acquiesce in it.

<sup>1</sup> See *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 251.

It is His Majesty's intention, as soon as he knows the declarations are exchanged, to give immediate orders for reducing the augmentation in his land forces, except only so far as may be necessary for making the intended addition to the peace establishments of his foreign possessions, and, from the desire to avoid every occasion of jealousy in all parts of the world, His Majesty is also desirous that a mutual explanation should take place respecting the additional force to be sent to the foreign possessions of the two countries, and it would certainly be a further proof of a good understanding being re-established between the two Courts, if it were agreed that the reinforcements intended to be sent on either side, should not proceed until the explanation I have mentioned is made on each side.

[For a despatch from Carmarthen to Dorset and Eden dated Whitehall, 17 November 1787, see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 283.]

[For a despatch from Carmarthen to Dorset and Eden dated Whitehall, 18 December 1787, see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 291.]

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 23.)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET.

Whitehall, 18 December 1787.

I have lately received from different quarters accounts of a proposal of a most extraordinary nature made to the Court of Petersbourg on the part of those of Vienna and Versailles, of which the foundation was to be that France, on consenting to abandon the Turks and enter into the measures of the Imperial Courts, was to stipulate for considerable advantages to herself from the result of these measures.

Such a plan implies a union of so many interests which are naturally opposite, and so extraordinary a change of system in the politicks of France, that I am inclined to think either that some loose ideas which may have been hastily started on this subject have been carried farther than was deliberately intended by the French ministry, or that the report itself (tho' it comes with great appearance of authenticity) has considerably exaggerated the real circumstances. The accounts however given by Your Grace and Mr. Eden

of M<sup>r</sup>. de Montmorin's reserve on the subject of Turkey rather confirm the idea that some concealed plan is in agitation. . . . .

[For despatches from Carmarthen to Dorset and Eden dated Whitehall, 6 and 11 January 1788, see *Auckland Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 297.]

(*Ibid.*, no. 29.)

CARMARTHEN TO HAILES.

Whitehall, 26 August 1788.

No. 2. [? Circular.]

I take the earliest opportunity of acquainting you that a treaty of defensive alliance between His Majesty and the King of Prussia was signed at Berlin the 13<sup>th</sup> instant by M<sup>r</sup>. Ewart and the Comte de Hertzberg. As soon as the ratifications of it have been exchanged I shall send you a copy of it to be communicated to the Court where you reside, and it is with the greatest satisfaction that I now congratulate you on the conclusion of an alliance of so much importance to the mutual interests of both countries, and which may be the means of preventing the troubles which at present so unhappily exist from extending themselves more generally into other parts of Europe.

The system of close friendship and alliance now so happily and completely establish'd between His Majesty and the King of Prussia, cannot be render'd more effectual than by the ministers of both Crowns resident in foreign countries acting in concert together, as far as the nature of their instructions will admit of. I am therefore to desire you, Sir, to establish such a degree of cordial intimacy with the Prussian minister resident at the Court you are placed in, as may convince the power to whom you are accredited of the sincere friendship which subsists between the two sovereigns, and their mutual and earnest desire of contributing by their joint efforts towards the maintenance of the general tranquillity of Europe, and the accomodation of those particular disputes which have unhappily arisen in the Eastern and Northern parts of the continent.

With regard to your conduct towards the Prussian minister respecting matters of a more secret description, much must depend on the personal character of the minister you have to deal with, and your own penetration must be the best guide to direct you

how far he may be entitled to confidence without the risk of any indiscreet use being made of such information as you may afford him.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 29.*)

Whitehall, 29 August 1788.

No. 4.

I am to signify to you His Majesty's pleasure that you will procure and transmit to me for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, the best accounts that can be obtained of the following particulars concerning the trade carried on by France on the coast of Africa and particularly in negro slaves, vizt.

1st. The number of slaves exported by France from her settlements on the coast of Africa annually and the ports or places to which the slaves are carried.

2dly. The prices at which these slaves are bought in Africa and are sold again in the colonies and settlements belonging to France with the number of slaves which are supposed to perish on an average during the voyage.

3. The number and tonnage of the ships employed and cargoes exported in such ships for the purpose of carrying on the trade, and of what countries such cargoes are the produce or manufacture.

4. What missionaries have ever been sent out by France for the instruction of the people of Africa in the Christian religion, and what has been their success therein or in bringing the people of that country to any degree of civilization, and whether France has ever planted any colonies in Africa for the purpose of cultivating the soil and exporting the produce, in what manner and with what success.

Lastly. Any orders which may have been made by the government of France regulating her settlements on the coast of Africa for the better carrying on this trade, or the treatment of the slaves in her colonies and settlements.

(*Ibid., no. 30.*)

CARMARTHEN TO DORSET.

Whitehall, 24 October 1788.

I am to signify to Your Grace His Majesty's pleasure that you procure and transmit to me for the information of the Lords of



the Committee of Privy Council for Trade the best information that can be obtained, 1<sup>st</sup> of the amount of the taxes levied in the several colonies belonging to France in the West Indies, and on what articles the same are raised, distinguishing as far as possible the imposts which are appropriated to the purposes of colonial government, from any which may be levied and remitted to France for the use of the mother country ;

2<sup>dly</sup>. An account of the several duties levied and paid in France on the importation and consumption of any article, the produce of the French colonies, distinguishing the duties paid on each article ;

And 3<sup>dly</sup>. An account of the price at which lands fit for the cultivation of sugar and other articles usually sell in the several colonies of France in the West Indies as far as the same can be obtained, and of the terms on which such lands have been or may be granted by the Crown.

(*Ibid.*)

Whitehall, 28 October 1788.

No. 20 [in cypher].

In addition to what is contained in my circular letter of this day's date, I am to desire Your Grace would verbally state to M<sup>o</sup>r de Montmorin the pleasure with which His Majesty finds an opportunity of communicating his sentiments on the present situation of the North to the Most Christian King, whose sentiments on the subject His Majesty would learn with the greatest pleasure and most friendly attention ; and it is indeed an additional satisfaction to the King to reflect that the interests of both countries appear to point out one common object on this occasion, I mean the re-establishment of public tranquillity in the North, on such fair and reasonable terms as may prevent any material change in the balance of power in the Baltic, and of course preserve both to France and England the many advantages their subjects respectively derive from their commerce in those parts.

<sup>1</sup> INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . JOHN, DUKE OF DORSET . . . APPOINTED  
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY and PLENIPOTENTIARY TO . . .  
THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 9 January 1784.

[Formal, except for clauses 8, 9, and 10, which run :—]

8. You shall use your utmost endeavours to discover what plans or secret designs the Court of France may have formed or may be forming in the East Indies ; what number of ships of war, or land forces may have been sent from the different ports of France to the East Indies since the cessation of hostilities ; what ships or land forces may be preparing to be sent thither. As also whether and what orders have been sent out to the Commander of their forces at the Cape of Good Hope ; whether the States-General have required the evacuation of that settlement, and whether there may have been any agreement entered into on that point between the Court of France and the States-General. On the whole every information you can procure with regard to the designs of the Court of France either relative to their connection with the several Princes in the East Indies or any designs they may have formed to the prejudice of Our subjects in that country, is of the greatest importance and as such highly deserving of your most serious and constant attention.

9. You will make it an object of your very particular attention to discover whether any treaties are either in agitation or actually entered into between France and any other European state, and in case such treaties should actually exist or be only under consideration, you will take every measure in your power to be informed on the nature and extent of such treaty or treaties.

10. And it will likewise be an object well worthy of your most serious attention to discover whether any foreign ships of war are actually in any of the ports of France and in case such ships should be in the ports of the said Kingdom, to ascertain as far as possible the number, force, and destination of them respectively.

[Clause 13 (" You will in general ") is made to apply to both King and Queen of France.]

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 248.

## APPENDIX

### I. INSTRUCTIONS ON QUESTIONS IN THE COLONIES 1750

(*P.R.O., F.O. 90 (Kings' Letters), no. 15B, p. 251.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WILLIAM MILDMAY, APPOINTED COMMISSARY FOR  
SETTLING FINALLY THE ACCOUNT OF THE EXCHANGE AND RANSOM  
OF PRISONERS OF WAR.

St. James', 29 March 1750.

You are without loss of time to repair to Paris, there to confer upon this subject with such person or persons as may be so appointed for that purpose.

You are to have regard to the Convention made at Frankfort in the year 1743 as the general rule by which you are to govern yourself, and if any points may have been agreed upon in settling any former account or upon the meeting of other commissarys heretofore in vertue of that Convention, you are to conform yourself thereto.

You are not to comprehend in the roll of prisoners exchanged or ransom'd any such persons as were made prisoners who, being born Our subjects, were guilty of the crime of rebellion, but whom We were graciously pleased to pardon and to send back to France.

And you are to obey such further orders and instructions as you shall from time to time receive from Us or from one of Our principal Secretarys of State, with whom you shall constantly correspond.

(*Ibid., p. 252.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WILLIAM SHIRLEY AND WILLIAM MILDMAY  
APPOINTED COMMISSARIES TO ADJUST THE POINTS IN DISPUTE IN  
AMERICA AS WELL AS ALL MATTERS RELATING TO PRISONERS OF  
WAR TAKEN AT SEA IN THE COURSE OF THE LATE WAR AND TO ALL  
PRIZES TAKEN SINCE HOSTILITIES SHOULD HAVE CEASED IN THE  
RESPECTIVE SEAS PURSUANT TO THE PRELIMINARY ARTICLES.

St. James', 14 April 1750.

1. You are to repair to Paris with all convenient speed, and having notified your arrival there to the commissaries His Most Christian

Majesty has appointed for the same purpose, you will proceed on the business of your commission without any unnecessary delay.

2. As We shall send you hereafter Our instructions upon the more important part of your commission which relates to the limits and other disputes in America, you will set out with that which regards the sea prisoners and prizes, and that you may be fully apprized of Our Pleasure upon those heads, We have directed copies of two memorials which have been transmitted to Our Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary at the French Court upon this occasion to be delivered to you herewith, to which you will conform yourselves accordingly, and We have likewise directed the memorials delivered by the French ministers to which one of the abovementioned is an answer, to be given you as a guide, and in order to prepare you the better to answer the arguments the French commissaries may make use of in support of their pretensions.

3. When the steps particularly set forth in those papers as necessary to be previously adjusted with the French Court shall be adjusted according to the rules therein laid down for your conduct, you will proceed to the determination of all cases relating thereto, as speedily as a due and full examination of all parties concerned will admit of.

4. And that you may be in time informed of every difficulty, you will immediately give free access to such persons as shall apply to you on matters relating to your commission, and will receive from them such papers and documents as may be of use and necessary to clear up any of the cases you are to consider of and determine.

5. Should such difficulties arise as should occasion a doubt in your opinion, you will transmit an exact state of such cases over hither, for your farther information and direction thereupon.

6. And whereas the Lords the States General of the United Provinces are likewise, pursuant to the declaration made at Aix la Chapelle the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 1748, to name commissaries to treat on their part of captures made on either side contrary to the tenor thereof, you are to give them all kind and friendly advice and assistance, We being desirous of giving proofs on every occasion of Our sincere regard for Our good Allies.

7. As to the other part of your commission relating to sea prisoners taken during the course of the late war, you will endeavour to obtain the most advantageous terms you possibly can, in making up accounts and receiving the ballance for the ransom and subsistence of all such prisoners according to such vouchers and documents as shall be transmitted to you from hence for this purpose.

8. You are to send over hither to one of Our principal Secretaries of State, accounts of what you shall do in matters of your commission from whom you will likewise receive Our farther orders and directions.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 90 (Kings' Letters), no. 15B, p. 263.*)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WILLIAM SHIRLEY AND WILLIAM MILDMAY  
APPOINTED COMMISSARIES TO TREAT WITH THE COMMISSARY OR  
COMMISSARIES TO BE APPOINTED BY THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

Herrenhausen, 1750.

Whereas you have received Our commission under the Great Seal of Great Britain appointing you the said William Shirley and William Mildmay jointly and severally to be Our commissaries for treating of and concluding with the commissary or commissaries nominated on the part of Our good brother the Most Christian King all such matters and things as are referred to your cognizance and determination by the said commission.

You are therefore with all convenient speed to repair to the French Court and you are to meet the commissary or commissaries to be appointed by Our said good brother the Most Christian King, to whom you shall communicate your full powers and [at] the same time inspect the commission or powers given to him or them, in order to see whether they be in due and sufficient form, in which case you are to enter into treaty with the said commissary or commissaries, wherein you shall proceed as directed by your commission and these instructions.

Whereas Our right to the entire province of Accadia or Nova Scotia is clear and incontestible, and nothing is of so much importance or can tend more immediately to the preservation of the good harmony which at present so happily subsists between the two Crowns as the speedy determination of the disputes relating thereto, you are to use your utmost endeavours that this point be the first to be discussed.

Whereas by the twelfth article of the Treaty of Utrecht it is stipulated as follows, viz<sup>t</sup>. Dominus Rex Christianissimus eodem quo pacis præsensis ratihabitationes commutabuntur die<sup>1</sup> Dominae Reginae Magnae Britanniae literas tabulasve solennes et authenticas tradendas curabit, quarum vigore insulam Sancti Christophori per subditos Britannicos sigillatim dehinc possidendam Novam Scotiam quoque sive Acadium, totam limitibus suis antiquis comprehensam ut et Portus Regii urbem nunc Annapolin Regiam dictam, caeteraque omnia in istis regionibus quae ab iisdem terris et insulis pendent una cum earundem insularum, terrarum et locorum dominio, proprietate, possessione, et quocunque jure, sive per pacta sive alio modo quaesito, quod Rex Christianissimus Corona Galliae aut ejusdem subditi quicumque ad dictas insulas terras et loca eorumque incolas hactenus habuerunt, Reginae Magnae Britanniae ejusdemque Coronae in perpetuum cedi constabit et transferri, prout eadem omnia nunc cedit ac transfert Rex Christianissimus

<sup>1</sup> *The MS. reads dei.*



idque tam amplis modo et formâ ut Regis Christianissimi subditis in dictis maribus, sinibus aliisque locis ac littora Novae Scotiae, ea nempe quae Eurum respiciunt intra triginta leucas, incipiendo ab insulâ vulgo Sable dicta eâque inclusâ et Africum versus pergendo omni piscatura in posterum interdicatur.

You are to insist that Acadia, part of which has since been call'd Nova Scotia, was actually deemed and understood by both nations to be bounded by the following limits, vizt. On the west lying towards New England by the River Penobscot or Pentagonet from the mouth thereof by a direct line northward to the river St<sup>t</sup>. Lawrence or great river of Canada, on the north by the said River along the south shore to Cape Rozier lying at the entrance thereof, on the East by the great Gulph of St<sup>t</sup>. Lawrence, from the said Cape Rozier south-eastwards by the Baccalio islands or Cape Breton leaving those islands on the right and the Gulph of St<sup>t</sup>. Lawrence and Newfoundland with the islands thereunto belonging on the left to the Cape or Promontary called Cape Breton, and on the South by the great Atlantick Ocean, southwestward from the said Cape Breton by Cape Sable, including the island of the same name round by the bottom of the Bay of Fundy which runs easterly up into the country to the entrance of the said Penobscot or Pentagoet river, and you are to insist that as all the lands, continents, islands, shores, bays, and rivers comprehended within the said limits or dependent upon the said province so bounded as aforesaid have been claimed at different times by the French under the name of Acadia and constantly held and enjoyed by that Crown, as such, during its possession of that province, the same was in the whole and without any diminution or reserve whatever, except as is therein excepted fully ceded to Our Crown by the aforementioned article of the said treaty and that nothing was by the said article excepted out of Acadia or Nova Scotia, so bounded as aforesaid, but the island of Cape Breton, and such other islands as lye within the mouth of the River St<sup>t</sup>. Lawrence or in the Gulph of the same name.

And whereas the Crown of France has at several times during it's possession of Acadia endeavoured by claim and otherways to extend the western limits thereof as far as the River Kennebeck, pretending that the lands or territory lying betwixt the Rivers Penobscot and Kennebeck were part of Acadia and belonged to it as such and have inserted the said lands or territory in the commission to their Governors of Acadia or some of them, which said lands or territory did then and do now belong to Our Crown, you are to insist that the Crown of France was obliged by the Treaty of Utrecht to yield, and did actually by the said treaty yield to Our Crown all the islands lands and places whatsoever which that Crown had at any time possessed as Acadia or Nova Scotia or as dependent thereupon, and all right whatsoever thereunto

whether obtained by treaty or otherways, and therefore that all the lands and territory lying between the Rivers Penobscot and Kennebeck bounded to the Northward by the River St<sup>t</sup>. Lawrence do as well by virtue of the said treaty as by antient right belong to the Crown of Great Britain, and you are to press that necessary orders be dispatched for the due execution of the aforesaid article of the Treaty of Utrecht according to the true intent and meaning thereof and for removing any settlements made by the subjects of Our said good brother if there be any such within the limits aforesaid.

And whereas the French have for several years since the said Treaty of Utrecht taken upon them to fish upon the coast of Acadia or Nova Scotia contrary to the express words of the 12<sup>th</sup> article of the said treaty hereinbeforementioned, you are hereby directed to insist that the French have no right or title to fish anywhere within thirty leagues of any part of the coast of Acadia or Nova Scotia which lyes to the East, beginning at the island commonly called Sable inclusive, and thence stretching southwest as far as the above stated limits of Acadia or Nova Scotia, and of the territories possessed or claimed by the French as such do extend.

And that you may be the better enabled to pursue these Our Instructions and to treat with the commissary or commissarys nominated on the part of Our said good brother upon the matters aforesaid, you will receive herewith a state of Our right to the entire province of Acadia or Nova Scotia and to whatever lands or territories have been possessed or claimed by the Crown of France, as such, together with authentick copies of all papers necessary to prove the facts therein contained.

Whereas We have a clear and undoubted right to the island of St<sup>t</sup>. Lucia acquired by early discovery, settlement and purchase from the native Indians, maintained by perpetual claim and actual possession and ratified and confirmed by the Treaty of Breda ;

And whereas We have likewise a clear and undoubted right and title to the Islands of St<sup>t</sup>. Vincents and Dominico founded on discovery, possession and the submission or cession of the natives, kept up by frequent claims and confirmed likewise by the said Treaty of Breda, you are to insist that We have the sole right and title to the said Islands of St<sup>t</sup>. Lucia, St<sup>t</sup>. Vincents and Dominico, as belonging to Our Crown.

And in order to enable you in treating with the commissary or commissarys nominated on the part of the Most Christian King, the better to assert and maintain Our right to the said three islands, you will receive herewith a state thereof, together with such authentick papers as may be necessary to prove the facts alledged therein.

And whereas We have an undoubted right to the Island of Tobago founded upon first discovery and possession, maintained and supported

by repeated acts of sovereignty, uninterrupted claim and a continuance of that possession, which right has never been yielded or given up by treaty or otherwise, but on the contrary strenuously asserted whenever it has been disputed, you are to insist that We have the sole right to the said island of Tobago ;

And whereas the French Ambassador did, in a memorial presented to Our Royal Predecessor King William in 1699 found a claim to the said island upon a supposed conquest from the Dutch in the year 1677 and a pretended cession thereof by the States General to the Crown of France by the <sup>1</sup> article of the Treaty of Nimeguen, you are to insist that the said supposed conquest was a meer transient invasion and devastation of the settlements of those whose possession was only usurped, and that therefore the Crown of France did not thereby acquire any right, and that as the States General had not at that time any right or title whatsoever to the said island, and the French were not in possession thereof at the time of the ratification of the Treaty of Nimeguen, therefore, that the States General neither could nor did by the said Treaty convey any right to the Crown of France.

And that you may be enabled to assert Our right to the said island of Tobago and to confute the said claim of the Crown of France, there is hereunto annexed a state of Our title to the said island, together with all such papers as may be necessary to prove the facts therein alledged.

But if the commissary or commissaries of Our said brother should found a claim to the Island of Tobago upon any pretence not included in the said memorial of the French Ambassador in the year 1699 Our Will and Pleasure is that you do transmit a copy of such claim to one of Our principal Secretaries of State, for Our information, and to wait for Our further instructions before you proceed to answer the same.

Whereas you will hereafter receive further instructions in relation to the boundaries of Our other possessions in America, upon which disputes have arisen or may arise with the Crown of France, and upon such other matters as may be in controversy between the two Crowns in America, you are to take particular care that in the wording of such articles as shall be agreed upon by you, or either of you in the absence of the other, with the commissary or commissaries nominated on the part of the Crown of France in relation to the boundaries of Acadia or Nova Scotia, that We be not thereby precluded with respect to the boundaries of any other lands or territories which We or Our subjects may have a right to on the continent of America. And therefore you are to insist that His Most Christian Majesty has no right to any lands whatsoever lying between the river St. Lawrence and the Atlantick Ocean except such islands as lye in the mouth of the said

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<sup>1</sup> Tobago is not in fact mentioned in the Treaty of Nimeguen.

river and in the gulph of the same name, and you are to declare to the commissary or commissaries nominated on the part of His Most Christian Majesty, that We have reason to believe that the subjects of His Most Christian Majesty have made several encroachments upon the territories and dominions belonging to Us and Our subjects in those and many other parts in North America, which matters may hereafter be discussed when the points contained in these instructions shall have been discussed, settled, and concluded.

You are hereby required to communicate from time to time all your proceedings during the course of your negociation unto Our Right Trusty and Right Welbeloved Cousin William Anne Earl of Albemarle, Our Ambassador Extraordinary now residing at the French Court, and to confer and consult with him on all matters relating thereunto, and desire his advice and assistance in carrying on the negociation entrusted to your care, and, in his absence, to such persons as shall be charged with Our affairs at the said Court.

And whereas divers matters and difficulties may arise during the course of your negociation which could not be sufficiently foreseen and provided for by these Our instructions, you are hereby directed to keep a constant correspondence with one of Our principal Secretaries of State, to whom you shall, by all occasions, transmit an exact account of your proceedings, and you are to govern yourselves by such further instructions as you shall from time to time receive from Us under Our Royal Sign manual, or by one of Our principal Secretaries of State. You are also to correspond with Our Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, desiring their advice upon any difficulties that may occur.

At your return from the French Court you are to lay before Us a full and particular account of your proceedings in the several matters contained in your said commission and in these Our instructions, as likewise in all such matters as shall from time to time be referred to your negociation by one of Our principal Secretaries of State, and you are also to deliver to Our commissioners for Trade and Plantations a duplicate of the said account, so far as the same may relate to their cognizance.

## II. DESPATCH ON DUNKIRK.

(*P.R.O.*, *S.P.* 78, *no.* 290.)

ROCHFORD TO LIEUT.-COLONEL BRAMHAM.

St. James', 8 November 1773.

Captain Frazer and Ensign Durnford, His Majesty's commissary and assistant commissary at Dunkirk having differed in their opinions concerning the effects and consequences of some new works erected



there by the French and which it appears to be their intention of carrying on to a much more considerable extension; and the King having thought fit in consequence thereof to send thither another engineer in order that he should inspect minutely into and report his opinion of every particular, His Majesty has been graciously pleased to make choice of you for this service. I am therefore to signify to you the King's pleasure that you do forthwith repair to Dunkirk, and after having waited on the Governor or commanding officer of the place and delivered to him the inclosed introductory letter, you will confer with Captain Frazer who has been directed to furnish you with all such draughts, maps and plans of the town and port of Dunkirk and its environs, and of the several canals, sluices and other works thereunto belonging as may be necessary for your inspection, and after your having received from Captain Frazer every necessary information, you will then proceed to view the said port, town, canal, sluices and every other place or thing which it may be of use to you to inspect, in order that you may form a more accurate judgment of the whole and especially of the new works already begun and proposed to be extended, and I am to recommend to you to attend chiefly to the following points, vizt.

1st. To examine into the particular circumstances wherein Captain Frazer and Ensign Durnford vary in their different reports, of all of which you have had the perusal, together with the plans transmitted by each of them, as also of the plan from Count d'Herouville and of Colonel Roy's memorandums thereupon.

2ndly. To inspect minutely into the present state of the new quai, and how far they have already proceeded upon it, and likewise to make the most exact enquiries how much farther they mean to go, and how long it will be before it is compleated if carried on with the same activity with which they have executed the first part.

3dly. To consider well how far what is already done may be materially prejudicial in contributing to render it more a military port, or more capable of being restored than it was before, and put them in a more convenient situation to annoy us with their privateers in time of war, and how much farther the completion of their whole scheme may cause those objects to be more apprehended.

4thly. To examine into the repair of the slip for building ships, and how far what they have done to it is of consequence.

5thly. To examine what difference of water there is close to the new quai in the present state of it from what there was before it was repaired, and whether from the additional works they are better enabled than they were before to carry into and out of the port a ship of 300 tons or a greater burthen.

After you have performed all these services and collected every



necessary and useful notices, you will return to England and make a full report thereupon for His Majesty's information, but in case before your return you should want any new instructions on any particular point, you will acquaint me therewith, and you shall have an immediate answer.

I recommend to you that you avoid by all means to enter into a discussion with the French engineers or to join with them in any *procès verbaux*, and that your report be only from yourself on these subjects.

### III. INSTRUCTIONS AND DESPACHES ON THE TRADE NEGOCIATIONS.

(*P.R.O.*, *F.O.* 27, no. 13.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . . GEORGE CRAUFURD, ESQ<sup>RE</sup>. . . . . APPOINTED . . . . . COMMISSARY TO TREAT WITH THE COMMISSARY OR COMMISSARIES TO BE APPOINTED BY . . . . . THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING.

St. James', 2 September 1784.

Whereas you have received Our commission under the Great Seal of Great Britain, appointing you to be Our commissary for treating and concluding with the commissary or commissaries nominated on the part of Our good brother the Most Christian King all such matters and things as are referred to your cognizance and determination by the said commission, you are therefore with all convenient speed to repair to the French Court, and you are to meet the commissary or commissaries to be appointed by Our said good brother the Most Christian King, to whom you shall communicate your full powers and at the same time inspect the commission or powers given to him or them by Our said good brother in order to see whether they be in due and sufficient form, in which case you are to enter into negotiation with the said commissary or commissaries and proceed therein as you are directed by your commission, and these Our instructions.

2. And whereas by the 18th article of the definitive treaty of peace between Us and Our said good brother concluded at Versailles the 3<sup>d</sup> day of September 1783 it is stipulated that commissaries shall be respectively appointed to treat concerning new arrangements of commerce between the two nations on the basis of reciprocity and mutual convenience, wherefore after having fully considered the several stipulations of the said treaty as well as the declaration and counterdeclaration signed by the respective plenipotentiaries relative to a revision of the treaty of commerce between the two Crowns concluded at Utrecht in 1713, and also the several papers which you will receive herewith upon that subject, you will enter into conferences with the

French commissary or commissaries thereupon, in which you will endeavour (as may be most agreeable to the interests of both nations, to examine more thoroughly into the methods of trade on both sides, and to find out and establish just and mutually advantageous means both for removing the impediments in that matter, and for regulating the duties on both sides in order to the settling a free and open intercourse of trade between the two nations and thereby strengthening the peace and augmenting the benefits of it for the good of Our subjects in particular.

3. And whereas by the 11th article of the said definitive treaty it is stipulated that the high contracting parties shall name commissaries to be charged with the settling and fixing of the boundaries of the respective possessions on the coast of Africa, you are therefore, taking the several cessions and guaranties comprised in the said treaty for your guide, and being furnished with such further information on that head as you will receive herewith, to proceed to the negotiation of this point with the French commissaries who may be duly authorized to confer with you thereupon, and you shall endeavour to settle the said boundaries in the most beneficial manner for the trade of Our subjects in those parts.

4. You are hereby required to communicate from time to time all your proceedings during the course of your negotiation to Our Right Trusty and Right Entirely Beloved Cousin and Councillor, John, Duke of Dorset, Our Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary now residing at the Court of Our said good brother, and to confer and consult with him on all matters relating thereto, and desire his advice and assistance in carrying on the negotiation entrusted to your care, and in his absence, you are to make the like communication and application to such person as shall be charged with Our affairs at the said Court.

5. And whereas divers matters and difficulties may arise during the course of your negotiation which could not be sufficiently foreseen and provided for by these Our instructions, you are hereby directed to keep up a constant correspondence with Our Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to whom you shall by all opportunities transmit an exact account of your proceedings, and you are to govern yourself by such further instructions as you shall from time to time receive from Us under Our Royal Sign Manual or by Our said Secretary of State; but you will on no account whatever agree to or conclude on any matter which may be proposed to you on the part of the Court of France without first having received Our express approbation and orders for so doing under Our Royal Sign manual or by Our aforesaid Secretary of State.

6. At your return from the said Court, you are to lay before Us a full and particular account of all your proceedings in the several matters

contained in Our said commission and in these Our instructions, as likewise in all such other matters as shall have been from time to time entrusted to your care by Us or by Our said Secretary of State.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 16, p. 207.*)

CARMARTHEN TO CRAUFURD.

St. James', 4 March 1785.

The very heavy duty of sixty per cent which the French have lately thought proper to lay upon English carriages imported into France is not only very detrimental to a considerable branch of the trade of this country, but likewise merits a very serious degree of consideration from its evident tendency to prevent that spirit of conciliation and friendly liberality so necessary at this time to produce any good effect on those commercial arrangements now in contemplation between the two countrys. At any time a measure of this sort would be looked upon in an unfavourable light but at present it must appear equally impolitic and unfriendly and if followed by what naturally may be the consequence of it, a reciprocal increase of duty on our part upon the importation of some material article of French produce, we shall only act in compliance with the strictest justice as well as policy.

I could wish you to explain the whole effect naturally to be expected from such a measure in the most forcible though at the same time friendly manner to Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval.

From your silence, Sir, I must conclude that you have hitherto been able to make no progress in the pursuit of the object of your mission, and cannot but say I am much surprized at no opening having been made to you on the subject. It seems necessary to come to a full explanation upon one particular point which the French Court (at least according to the language of the Comte d'Adhemar) seem wilfully and affectedly to misunderstand: I mean respecting the stipulations of the commercial Treaty of Utrecht of 1713. According to the Comte d'Adhemar, his Court pretend the regulations contained in that treaty to be null and void, whether any new arrangements respecting trade shall be agreed upon or not. This however can by no means be admitted, as till such alterations or additions as shall be finally agreed upon between the two Courts render a change of system valid and effectual, it would be the height of folly to suppose the former regulations no longer binding on the contracting parties. On this point you will likewise, Sir, take care to come to a full explanation with Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval, and you will recollect that as France appears desirous of a revision of our former commercial arrangements with the probable view of proposing some alterations in the system, of which I am not aware of any complaint being made on our part, it is naturally to be expected that she

should communicate her wishes upon the subject. The reason of so long a delay on the part of France to declare her sentiments, or even to express any opinion on this matter I own surprizes me, nor can I account for her conduct unless she is become indifferent to any commercial agreement being entered into with this country, and therefore regardless of the term prescribed by the treaty expiring without coming to any decision on the subject.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 16, p. 257.*)

St. James', 19 April 1785.

Mo<sup>r</sup>. Barthelemi desired to see me on Sunday last. I found the subject on which he wished to speak to me was the commercial arrangements between the two countrys. He said Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Vergennes was much surprized at the delay on the part of England to enter upon the discussion of this business. In answer to the observation of delay I replied that you, Sir, were fully authorized to treat with the ministers or such persons as his Court should appoint for the purpose, but that conceiving as I did that France originally proposed the making certain alterations in the system of commerce established by the Treaty of Utrecht, it was for her to propose such alterations as she might wish England to adopt agreeable to those principles of mutual advantage and reciprocal convenience which were to serve as the foundations of any new arrangements the two Courts might wish to establish.

Such, Sir, being the case, Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval certainly cannot with justice impute any delay to us. I own I am not aware of any great advantage likely to accrue to us from making any proposals to them, but you may express the utmost readiness to hear and report whatever that gentleman may have to propose in order to its being taken into consideration with as little delay as possible.

(*Ibid., no. 17, p. 771.*)

St. James', 5 August 1785.

The affected delay on the part of M. de Rayneval in making any proposals for a new commercial arrangement 'till such time as the basis of the negotiation prepared by him was either accepted or rejected *in toto* shewed the little desire of that gentleman to proceed in a fair and equitable manner. Mutual benefits and reciprocal advantages are indisputably the objects we are inclined to pursue in the adjustment of this business, but to say at once that the two nations shall be entitled to those priviledges which are alone allowed to the most favoured nations by way of a basis to the negotiation and without weighing the nature and consequence of such priviledges is totally impossible; and of this I think Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval must be convinced when he recollects that it was a stipulation of this sort contained in the 8th

and 9th articles of the Treaty of commerce of Utrecht in 1713 that prevented these articles from ever being carried into effect.

Tho' it must be admitted as a truth that we cannot listen to a proposition of this sort as a basis without forfeiting every claim to prudence or indeed to common sense, at the same time this refusal can by no means be looked upon as precluding any proposal the Court of Versailles may wish to introduce during the course of the negotiation.

Thus much for the first difficulty which has occurred upon the subject. Another much more important one has however since arisen and which unless speedily done away will effectually put an end to any possibility of a commercial intercourse between the two countrys; I mean the effect of the late edicts so inimical to the trade and manufactures of this country and what as originating probably in the peevishness of one moment will I trust be revoked upon the more cool and dispassionate reflection of another.

I shall be very happy to hear that Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval is disposed to enter upon the discussion of this business with you, though at the same time shall doubt much of any real benefit being obtained to either nation till I see more appearance of good humour and fair dealing on the part of France.

(*Ibid.*, no. 19.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR . . . . WILLIAM EDEN, APPOINTED ENVOY EXTRA-ORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE COURT OF . . . . THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING, FOR NEGOCIATING COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS WITH SUCH PERSON OR PERSONS AS [the King of France] SHALL APPOINT FOR THAT PURPOSE.

St. James', 10 March 1786.

Upon receipt of these Our instructions, full powers and letters of credence, you are with all convenient speed to repair to Versailles or to such other place where Our good brother the Most Christian King shall keep his Court, of whom you shall ask an audience in Our name, when, having delivered your credentials, you shall assure him of the esteem and value we have for his person, and of Our sincere desire to cultivate the most perfect good correspondence between Us and Our said good brother and Our respective dominions.

2. You shall in like manner deliver Our letter of credence to the Most Christian Queen, accompanying the same with like expressions of Our esteem and friendship for her.

3. You are likewise to make suitable compliments in Our name to the Princes of the Blood, according to the stile and practice of that Court.

4. You are to meet the person or persons appointed by Our said



good brother the Most Christian King to whom you shall communicate your full powers, and at the same time inspect the commission or powers given to him or them by Our said good brother in order to see whether they be in due and sufficient form, in which case you are to enter into negociation with them.

5. And whereas by the 18<sup>th</sup> article of the definitive treaty . . . . . Utrecht in 1713<sup>1</sup> you will proceed to the consideration of such mutual regulations and duties as may tend to facilitate such an intercourse of trade between the two nations as may be the means of strengthening the peace and augmenting the benefits of it to Our subjects.

6. It is unnecessary for Us to point out to you the various objects which will come under your consideration in your negotiations with the person or persons authorized to treat with you on the very important commission with which you are intrusted as you are fully informed of the opinions of the several members of the committee of Our Council appointed by Us for the consideration of all matters relative to trade, and are yourself a member of that committee. You will therefore regulate your conduct by the result of the deliberations of that committee in the several points you will have to negotiate, and you will report to Our principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the progress you shall make from time to time therein for Our information.

7. And whereas by the 11<sup>th</sup> article . . . . . for your guide, to proceed to the negotiation of this point with the person or persons who may be duly authorised . . . . . in those parts.<sup>2</sup>

8. And whereas divers matters . . . . .<sup>3</sup>

9. At your return from the said Court . . . . .<sup>4</sup>

10. And in order to your corresponding with the greater security with Our said Secretary of State upon such matters as may require particular caution and secrecy, We have ordered cyphers and de-cyphers to be delivered to you.

(*P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 19.*)

CARMARTHEN TO EDEN.

Whitehall, 18 July 1786.

No. 9.

Your despatches nos. 25 and 26 with their several inclosures having been very maturely considered, I have received His Majesty's pleasure to convey to you the following instructions upon them.

<sup>1</sup> For the full text to this point see Craufurd's instructions above, Art. 2.

<sup>2</sup> For the full text see Craufurd's instructions above, Art. 3.

<sup>3</sup> As in Craufurd's instructions, Art. 5.

<sup>4</sup> As in Craufurd's instructions, Art. 6.

In answer to the question put by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval in his *Observations confidentielles* whether England has any engagements of a commercial nature similar to those by which France is pledg'd to Spain by the Family Compact, it may be alledg'd that Great Britain has no treaty with any foreign nation by which she has stipulated to grant any special privileges or advantages to the subjects of any foreign power, except the treaty with Portugal of the 27<sup>th</sup> of December 1703, which applies to wine only, and stipulates that the wines of Portugal shall be imported upon a duty one third less than those of France.

It is impossible to consent to the abolition of all prohibitions and of all prohibitory duties as suggested by Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval in the paper beforementioned, but His Majesty is ready to treat for the abolition of all prohibitions and all duties which place the navigation and commerce of the subjects of France upon a more disadvantageous footing than those of any other state except in the case of wine imported from Portugal as before stated, and to specify the rate of duty (which shall not be exceeded) upon some particular articles. This is the proposition made by His Majesty in the declaration presented to the Court of Versailles by you, and beyond this you are not authorized to engage.

In conformity to this principle, the duty on the wines of France which is at present £96. 5. 3 per ton, will be reduced to £61. 6. 4 per ton, and His Majesty is ready to engage, if it is desired by the Court of France, that the duty shall not be raised beyond that amount during the continuance of this treaty. This is a reduction of more than one third of the subsisting duties and leaves the duties on the wines of France precisely one third more than those now paid on the wines of Portugal.

In conformity to the same principle, the brandies of France will not pay higher duty than brandies imported from any other foreign country, and as the brandies of France are of a superior quality, they will, upon equal duties, have a preference in the consumption of this country above other foreign brandies. The vinegars of France pay at present a duty of £67. 5. 4 per ton, but in conformity to the principle abovementioned they will pay no more than £32. 18. 11½ which reduces the duty more than one half, and from their superior quality they also will have a preference in the consumption of this country. The circumstances of our own distilleries and of our trade in rum with our own colonies may make it inconvenient to engage for any particular rate of duty upon the brandies and vinegars of France, but the advantage given to them in the manner beforementioned seems sufficient to answer the object which the French Court has in view.

In return for these advantages which relate to objects of such

importance to the commerce of France, it is expected that the Court of Versailles shall consent that the hardware manufactures and the wollen and worsted manufactures, including worsted hosiery, of the European dominions of His Majesty and His Most Christian Majesty, should be allowed to be imported into the dominions of each upon reasonable duties.

You will endeavor to learn the sentiments of the French Court with respect to the duties on which they will consent to allow such importation of hardware and woollens ; it is conceived that the present duties on worsted hosiery imported into France are sufficiently low. You are in possession of all the evidence taken before the committee of the Privy Council on what relates to the opening a commercial intercourse with France, and you will find in that of the Sheffield manufacturers taken on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February and in that of the Birmingham manufacturers taken on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of March, their opinions on the advantages to be derived in opening a commercial intercourse between the two Kingdoms in these manufactures, as well as on the amount of the duties subject to which such intercourse was to be opened. They all agree that the duties on these articles cannot be too low, and certainly should not exceed ten per cent. In treating on this point you will endeavor to obtain that polished grates and other iron manufactures of a superior quality should be included under the head of hard-ware.

With respect to the woollen and worsted manufactures, you will find in the evidence of the Norwich manufacturers taken on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, of the Essex manufacturers taken on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, of the Yorkshire manufacturers taken on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January, and of the Wiltshire, Somersetshire and Gloucestershire manufacturers taken on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February and 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of March, their opinions on what relates to the opening the trade in the woollen and worsted manufactures of the two Kingdoms. The wish of all these manufacturers, except those who are concerned in making the finest sort of broad cloths, is, that the trade in these articles should be opened on a low duty, at highest not more than ten per cent. In Mr. Everitt's evidence taken on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March it is suggested that the duties might be as follows :—Three pence per yard on cloths under five shillings per yard : sixpence per yard from five to twelve shillings ; one shilling per yard from twelve shillings per yard and upwards.

This perhaps might be the best mode to be adopted and is most likely to reconcile the different interests of those concerned in the several branches of the woollen and worsted manufactures.

In conformity to the general principle above stated, the duties on French linens imported into Great Britain will be reduced from 75 per cent. to the duties now payable on linens imported from Holland

and Flanders, being from 25 to 30 per cent. according to their quality ; and when it is considered how great the import of French linens into this country was, compared with those imported from other foreign countries, when the duties on all such linens were nearly the same, we have a right to argue that France will derive great advantages from this concession.

You will always insist that in allowing the importation into this Kingdom of any article the growth or manufacture of France, which is necessarily consumed by the people of Great Britain and which the soil of it cannot produce, such as wine, or which the people of this country do not manufacture in sufficient quantity for their own consumption, such as linen, Great Britain gives to France a sufficient advantage by allowing them to be imported upon as advantageous a footing as they are imported from any other foreign country, as far as it is consistent with the stipulations of any existing treaty ; and the fact is that notwithstanding the high duties imposed on these articles, the importation of them from foreign countries has always been great, and the laws lately made with respect to the trade in wine will contribute to increase very considerably the importation of that article.

His Majesty will also be ready to treat for the taking off the prohibition on cambricks and lawns imported from France, and for imposing a duty of from about 12 to 15 per cent. or six shillings per demi-piece on the same. This will open the markets of this Kingdom to French cambricks and lawns, particularly to the finer sorts, in which the French manufacturers most excel. It should be observed that all these concessions with respect to linens must be understood to apply to the importation into Great Britain only, for in Ireland there is a general prohibition on the importation of foreign linens of all sorts, and it may perhaps be found that the Parliament of Ireland may be less disposed to remove the general prohibition into that Kingdom of all foreign linen than the Parliament of Great Britain may be to reduce the present duty on French linens to that which is paid on other foreign linens.

In return for these advantages it will be proper that you should insist that the cottons manufactured in the Kingdoms of each sovereign should be allowed to be imported into those of the other upon a reasonable duty. You will find in the evidence of Mr. Samuel Salt,<sup>1</sup> taken on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, as far as relates to muslins, in the evidence of Mr. Joseph Smith, taken on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February, and in the evidence of the said Mr. Smith and Mr. Robert Peele<sup>2</sup> taken on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, as far as relates to printed and white cottons and calicoes, and in the

<sup>1</sup> See *D.N.B.*

<sup>2</sup> The father of Sir Robert Peel ; see *D.N.B.*

evidence of Mr. John Hilton and Mr. William Frodsham, taken on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February, as far as relates to fustians, their opinion on the advantages to be derived from the opening the trade between the two Kingdoms in these manufactures, and on the duties proper to be imposed on their importation into each Kingdom. In the judgement of Messrs. Hilton and Frodsham it is for the interest of this country that the duty on fustians imported into each Kingdom should be as low as five per cent. It appears however from their evidence that Great Britain would have a very advantageous trade in these articles even under a duty of ten per cent., and in either case there is nothing to be apprehended from a competition with the French manufacturers in these articles. The duty on printed callicoes imported into this country should in the first place be made equal to the internal duty paid upon callicoes printed here, that is about 10 per cent. and if printed callicoes of the manufacture of France are subject to any internal duty in that Kingdom, the principle of reciprocity requires that our printed callicoes imported into France should pay an equal duty.

In addition to the printed duty on callicoes before mentioned, it may be proper to propose that there should be a duty of from £2. 10. to £5 per cent. upon these articles imported into each Kingdom. To prevent the importation of printed East India callicoes, the plan proposed by Mr. Peele in his evidence given on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, or some other equally secure should be adopted. There is so great a variety of cotton manufactures that the arranging the duty to be imposed upon each will be a business of some difficulty, but after you have settled the general rate, proper instructions will be sent to enable you to apply the rate to the several kinds of goods, and that you may know the names by which they are called in the language of the two countries, a paper of patterns is herewith sent, in which the French and English denomination is set opposite to each pattern.

In answer to what is proposed by Mr. de Rayneval with respect to silk manufactures, it is proper to observe that the prohibition in this Kingdom on foreign silk manufactures is general. They are prohibited to be imported or sold if they have been manufactured in any foreign country, except silk crapes and tiffanies of the manufacture of Italy, upon which there is a very high duty.

This prohibition therefore, except as relates to silk crapes and tiffanies is not among those which His Majesty by his declaration has consented to abolish, and you are fully apprized of the reasons which render it improper to make any concession that may affect the general prohibition, though there are certain silk manufactures in which Great Britain excels, and has therefore an advantage over the manufacturers of France, such as ribbons, silk-hosiery and gauzes, and certain mixed goods.



As the prohibition on silks imported from France is meant to continue, it cannot be expected that the French government will admit the general importation of silk manufactures from this country, but as silk-crepes and tiffanies will under the exception before mentioned, be allowed to be imported from France upon the same duties as those manufactured in Italy pay at present, it seems reasonable to expect that in return for this, the gawzes of Great Britain should be admitted into France upon a reasonable duty. And as gawzes are not manufactured in France or in any other country in so much perfection as in Great Britain, and if prohibited will probably force their way through some illicit channel, the French government may on these accounts perhaps be induced to agree to this proposal.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to what Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval calls *les glaces*, which I understand to be plate-glass, whether used in looking-glasses or otherwise, enquiries are making into the state of that manufacture in this country in order to know whether it is possible to settle any fixed duty under which they may be allowed to be imported into each Kingdom. And as the Court of Versailles may perhaps wish that their finer sorts of porcelain should be admitted into this country under a reasonable duty, you will endeavour to obtain in return for this, the admission of our pottery into France upon a low duty, and also to learn the sentiments of the French ministers upon this subject.

And with respect to what Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval calls *les modes*, as well as all other articles in which the commercial intercourse between the two countries may consist, it will be best to leave them under the general rule contained in His Majesty's declaration, vizt. that they are to be subject to no prohibition or duties other than the like articles are subject to, being the produce or manufacture of any other foreign country. Mo<sup>r</sup>. de Rayneval appears in his *observations confidentielles* to propose that every article of commercial intercourse should be made subject to a specific duty. In answer to this you should urge that to enter into a minute discussion on the duties proper to be imposed on every one of these articles would be a very difficult, if not an endless labour, and from the nature of the government of this country and the state of its revenue, perhaps impracticable. It would in effect be forming a new book of rates, and if such a work could be accomplished, it would necessarily retard the business and defeat the end the two Courts have in view of establishing as soon as possible a liberal and advantageous intercourse of commerce between the two Kingdoms.

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<sup>1</sup> The matter of silk was that for which the failure of the French government to secure any concessions has been most criticised by French writers.

(P.R.O., F.O. 27, no. 24.)

Whitehall, 11 February 1787.

No. 8.

Some discussion has recently taken place in Parliament, how far under the words of the 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> articles of the French treaty, this country will remain at liberty to admit the wines of Spain on as low duties as those which will be paid hereafter on those of Portugal in case the Methuen treaty should be adhered to.

On reference to the whole tenor of the correspondence with you in the late negotiation, and particularly to the instructions which I sent you by His Majesty's command in my dispatches no. 16, 18, and 31, it most fully appears that His Majesty's servants considered this liberty as most unquestionably reserved to this country, and particularly directed to be worded with that express object. And it is a point of indispensable necessity to adhere to this construction both on account of the importance annexed to it here, and because it has in fact been acted upon in the proposals which have been made to the Court of Spain. I have no doubt in my own mind that the matter is understood in its true light by the Court of France, and that you, Sir, have taken care to explain it so as to obviate every possible difficulty. But altho' this is probably the case and our meaning is so decisively proved by the correspondence to which I have referred, it seems to be thought here that the articles are so worded as to admit at least of a contrary construction. I am therefore to signify to you His Majesty's pleasure that you take an immediate opportunity of stating in writing to the French ministers the substance of the explanation which has been repeatedly given in my former dispatches, and that you endeavour to procure without loss of time, a ministerial answer acknowledging the sense we put on the articles in question. It is impossible, from the fairness and candour which has appeared in the whole negotiation, that the French government could be disposed to raise any cavil on the subject, even if it were a point material to their interests. But I have heretofore stated to you the circumstances which prove that any objection on the part of France would not tend to promote in reality their own interests, but would be at once in the highest degree ungracious towards Spain and unfair towards this country. . . . .

(Ibid.)

Whitehall, 13 February 1787.<sup>1</sup>

No. 9.

Enquiries are still going on before the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Plantations with a view to establish a general rate of

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<sup>1</sup> The rough draft of this despatch is in Pitt's hand.

duty on linens which may possibly admit of the importation of that article from France into Great Britain on terms more favourable than those stipulated by the treaty. I shall take the earliest opportunity of communicating to you the result of those enquiries. In the mean time, the resolution to be moved in the House of Commons will only provide that the duties shall not be higher on linens from France than from Holland and Flanders, but will not preclude any subsequent arrangement in the course of the present session whenever the plan can be adjusted. It appears however desirable that in Ireland the duty should be immediately fixed according to the explanation of the 6th article which you delivered to the French ministers and which limits the amount to that of the *hereditary duty* only.<sup>1</sup> The point has been already so fully explained and understood on both sides that nothing more is necessary than to reduce into form what has been already agreed upon. With that view, I am to signify to you His Majesty's pleasure that you should desire from the French government some official declaration of their acquiescence in the explanation which you gave of the article (as far as it relates to Ireland) and to transmit it to me, that His Majesty's servants may be enabled to furnish the Lord Lieutenant with authentic proofs of the construction given to this part of the treaty. The government of Ireland seem impatient to receive the fullest authority on this point, which is the reason of my forwarding this dispatch by a special messenger.

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<sup>1</sup> . . . . Le droit d'entrée fixe et héréditaire sur les toiles hollandoises de lin et de chanvre importées en Irlande, est de quatre sous et deux tiers d'un sou sterling par aune, qui, en évaluant l'aune à deux-chalings et six sous sterling (ou trois livres tournois) forme un droit d'environ quinze pour cent de la valeur. Il y a aussi des droits ultérieurs, posés annuellement par le Parlement, qui varient de temps en temps ; mais il n'est question que du premier droit fixe et héréditaire en réglant la quotité des droits à payer mutuellement sur les toiles de la France et de l'Irlande . . . . (Eden's declaration of 6 October 1786). After an attempt to reduce the duty to 12 per cent. the French government gave a declaration in accordance with the main contention.



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